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A

VOYAGE

IN THE

INDIAN OCEAN AND TO BENGAL,

Undertaken in the Year 1790:

CONTAINING

AN ACCOUNT OF THE SECHELLES-ISLANDS AND TRINCOMALE;

The Character and Arts of the People of India;

WITH SOME REMARKABLE RELIGIOUS RITES OF THE INHABITANTS OF BENGAL.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A VOYAGE IN THE RED SEA;

INCLUDING

A DESCRIPTION OF MOCHA,

AND OF THE TRADE OF THE ARABS OF YEMEN;

With some particulars of their Manners, Customs, &c.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

L. DE GRANDPRÉ.

An Officer in the French Army.

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VOYAGE

IN THE

INDIAN OCEAN, &c.

I WAS at the Isle of France in the year 1790, with a vessel too large and too sharp for the country. Not being able to dispose of her, I resolved on a trip to Bengal, where I hoped to find a good price and a ready market, though her construction was ill adapted to the navigation of the Ganges. But appearances being in her favour, this defect I trusted would be overlooked, and I was not mistaken.

I accordingly prepared for my departure, and was soon ready for sea. Several motives, and economy among the rest, determined me to discharge all my Europeans, and work the ship with black Indians, known by the name of Lascars; but, finding it impossible to procure them, I was under the necessity of putting up with thirty Manillese, whose pusillanimity and want of skill rendered the passage extremely difficult.

The first vexation I experienced was their causing me to miss the harbour of the Isle of Bourbon, where I intended to have taken in fresh provisions. I was therefore obliged to steer for the Sechelles-Islands, and I considered it as an instance of good fortune, that I arrived there in safety, after traversing a dangerous archipelago, in which navigation is

ſubject to a number of manœuvres, that require an experienced crew.

After four days of anxiety and labour, I arrived upon the Sechelles' bank. Thoſe who are deſirous of having a correct idea of this cluſter of iſlands and rocks, may be fully gratified by the chart of the chevalier Grenier. My approach to the bank was announced by the lead, and the *Iſle aux Frégates* being in ſight confirmed my ſituation. At ſix o'clock in the evening I made that ſmall iſland, and directed my courſe for Mahé, the capital of theſe eſtabliſhments, which the diſtance yet prevented me from perceiving. I was then in thirty fathom water.

The night was extremely tempeſtuous, and the next day, about eight in the morning, I diſcovered Mahé, where I came to anchor at three in the afternoon. The governor was an officer of engineers detached from the Iſle of France, and I received from him all the attention and aſſiſtance I could deſire.

The Sechelles form a ſmall and diſtinct archipelago in the midſt of the large one to the north of the Iſle of France. They are elevated above a bank of ſand, which entirely ſurrounds them. Their name is a compliment paid to M. de Sechelles; and the principal port derives its appellation in like manner from M. Mahé de la Bourdonnaie, the governor, to whom the colony of the Iſle of France is indebted for its beginning ſplendour.

It is ſingular, that iſlands ſhould have ſoundings, as theſe have, at a great diſtance from ſhore; and it is a circumſtance at the ſame time extremely advantageous to mariners, who, when in ſearch of them, can neither well miſs them, nor come upon them unexpectedly, ſo as to endanger their veſſel.

Among this group of iſlands ſome are nothing more than barren rocks; but four of them, Mahé,

St. Anne, Praſlin, and Frégates, contain water, and are capable of cultivation. Mahé is the principal and largeſt, and is about five leagues in circumference. It is of a ſecondary height, that is to ſay, upwards of a thouſand feet, as I gueſſed at leaſt, for I had no time to make exact obſervations. The whole iſland is a continued mountain, having ſeveral peaks without any conſiderable vallies between them. It is primitive or granitic, and the bare ſides of the peaks, riſing perpendicularly, diſcover, in many places, granite in its purity.

This mountain, as well as thoſe the tops of which compoſe the other iſlands, have undoubtedly ſerved as a reſting-place, againſt which the ocean, gradually depoſiting its ſediments, has formed the bank that ſurrounds them; and they will therefore, in a courſe of time, be united, in all probability, into one iſland.

Let us for a moment attend here to the phyſical changes of the globe, and the gradual organization of banks and maſſes from materials which the ſea heaps together in her boſom. The form of the Sechelles' bank appears to furniſh matter for reflection on the ſubject. If we remark, that the currents in the track of the general winds always follow the impulſe of thoſe winds, that is, here, always run to the north-weſt, we ſhall eaſily conceive, that theſe peaks of granite, uniting together at the baſe at a certain depth, have collected, for a long ſucceſſion of ages, all the looſe matter and extraneous bodies which the waves and tides have thrown in their way: driven againſt the ſouth-weſt points of theſe peaks, theſe materials have been ſtopped there, and have formed the bank above which the Sechelles-Iſlands riſe.

To this it will perhaps be objected, that ſome iſlands have their anchorage to leeward, as, for inſtance,

the Iſles of France and Bourbon, and thoſe of St. Helena and Aſcenſion, where no ſoundings are found to windward, and which have all a ſmall bank on the ſide oppoſite to the current. The anſwer is plain: theſe iſlands are volcanic. The Iſle of France bears ſuch evident veſtiges of an eruption, that lava is found at every ſtep. That of Bourbon is burning at preſent; the peak of Salazes is a volcano; and St. Helena ſtill exhibits the traces of flames on her mountains. As to Aſcenſion, its conflagration is ſo recent that its ſoil is nothing but aſhes; it has not yet had time to recover its ſprings, and accordingly a drop of water is not to be found through the whole iſland.

Whether theſe iſlands are the wreck of a mutilated continent, or have been thrown up by a ſubmarine exploſion, which I ſhould rather admit, their formation has been accompanied by accidents that have given cauſe for the accumulation of the banks in queſtion, which have no relation whatever to thoſe gradually organized by the ſea. Theſe iſlands are too new for the ocean to have had time to throw up againſt them the materials, which form ſhelves and maſſes accumulated in the ſilence of ages.

The bank which ſurrounds the Sechelles extends a conſiderable diſtance to leeward; but nothing can thence be concluded againſt what I have advanced. For this fact to ſubvert my theory, it would be neceſſary that the iſle of Mahé ſhould be alone; whereas it is compriſed in an archipelago ſituated in the midſt of two others ſtill more extenſive, and at no great diſtance apart. It is evident, that at various depths, never very conſiderable, theſe iſlands are all joined together at the baſe, from the northern extremity of the Laccadives even to the Iſles of France and Bourbon. The mountains of this continent form the iſlands that are perceptible and known to us; and many

others muſt exiſt, that, from their want of elevation, are condemned to remain ſubmerged. The iſle of Mahé is ſurrounded by tops of this kind, which, unable to riſe above the waves, have only intercepted the materials dragged on by the ocean in its courſe: they are now covered, and form the bank, the figure of which anſwers to their ſituation. It is probable, that the leeward part of the Sechelles' bank will not be left dry till long after that to windward; becauſe the currents, having now no obſtacle oppoſed to them, carry off with them into the immenſity of the deep the extraneous bodies which eſcape from the iſlands of this archipelago; while, on the contrary, the iſle of Mahé and the reſt, oppoſing a barrier to the tides, force them to depoſit the ſediments they contain on the point of reſiſtance. This hypotheſis is proved almoſt to evidence; for the bank of the Sechelles is elevated conſiderably to windward, ſo that we find only a very ſmall depth of water in the direct line of the tides, that is to ſay, to the ſouth-eaſt, and this depth muſt neceſſarily diminiſh daily. In ſhort, if any thing can give weight to my conjecture, it is, that the harbour of the Sechelles very ſenſibly becomes ſhallower, as does that alſo of the Iſle of France: which demonſtrates, not only that the ocean collects in thoſe places the extraneous bodies by which they are organized, but alſo, that its eaſy and gradual retreat takes place in theſe climates in the ſame uniform manner as our philoſophers have remarked in other parts of the globe.

As to the form of mountains, I ſhall obſerve, that, in general, when we meet with any of which the ſides are perpendicular, we need not heſitate in pronouncing them to be either primitive or volcanic; for that ſhape denotes either an exploſion or a ſtrong commotion. The ſecondary mountains, on the contrary, formed gradually by the ocean of ma-

terials inceſſantly collected by it, are oblique, unleſs they have been heaped on a ſteep rock; in which caſe, or if they have ſerved, after their formation, as a bed for a current, they may have been hollowed by the water, or cut perpendicularly: but ſuch examples are rare.

Since the period when the mountains of theſe iſlands were projected, in one of the great revolutions of the globe, nature has had time to gather upon them ſo great a quantity of vegetable ſubſtance, that, except in places where their form would not admit of it, they are every where covered by a bed of very thick earth; and, as they have only been frequented ſince the preſent century, they produce an extremely vigorous vegetation. The iſle of Mahé has but a ſingle cluſter of trees proper for ſhip-building, and of theſe a great many have been deſtroyed in the erection of houſes; but the government of the Mauritius has taken this object into conſideration, and iſſued decrees for its preſervation, particularly the tatamaka wood, which affords the fine curved pieces uſed in the conſtruction of ſhips.

The iſle of Mahé ſupports three ſmall iſlands nearly adjoining. The ſpace compriſed between the former and one of the latter, called St. Anne, forms a fine bay, ſerving as a harbour, which affords an excellent anchorage. Theſe iſlands are ſurrounded by an immenſe quantity of coral; probably the original matter of which the fragments heaped together by the ocean gradually form the banks and iſlands which the ſea organizes.

The coral here forms ſhelves of great extent; they riſe to the very ſurface of the ſea; but at the bottom of the bay, oppoſite Mahé nature has made a narrow channel, proceeding in a ſerpentine direction to the ſhore, and admitting a great depth of water. This place is commonly called Barachouas,

and, in caſe of neceſſity, might be made an harbour. The paſſage is very well adapted for that purpoſe, having perpendicular banks of coral on each ſide, which form a quay even with the water's edge; ſo that the channel is never expoſed to the roughneſs of the ſea.

Veſſels wiſhing to enter there carry a grapnel to the coral banks, and thus moor without the trouble of dropping the anchor.

The poſſeſſion of theſe iſlands is of the greateſt importance to France; and ſhe took care therefore to ſecure them, as ſoon as the colony of the Mauritius had acquired a degree of proſperity. The port and road of the Sechelles are at ſo ſmall a diſtance from it, as to be able to annoy its trade, and cut off its communication with India: ſo that, ſuppoſing they were of no other uſe, it muſt ever be of importance to the French government to prevent their falling into the hands of its enemies; but they are valuable on other accounts.

When the French ſucceeded in pilfering ſpices from the Dutch, the plants were conveyed to the Iſle of France, and carefully cultivated in the king's garden: a few proſperous years, with ſkilful and expenſive management, gave reaſon to hope they might be naturalized there, and government had even begun to diſtribute the young plants among the inhabitants, and teach them how they were to be reared; but the hurricanes ſoon put an end to ſo flattering a proſpect: the ſettler grew weary of the expenſe and extreme care neceſſary to the ſupport of an object of which the profit, while it was uncertain, was alſo at leaſt far diſtant; and the reſults, even in the king's garden, were by no means ſo ſatisfactory as was expected. The cinnamon produced only a light bark, triflingly unctuous, and very inferior in quality to that of the Moluccas. The

clove-trees dwindled ; and though the plant itſelf appeared healthy, its fruit did not anſwer the expectation of government. In a word, this buſineſs was nothing more, properly ſpeaking, than an object of curioſity : like thoſe orange-trees in Ruſſia, or in the North of Germany, which produce fruit by dint of attention, but the fruit is degenerate, has no taſte, no flavour, and ſcarcely even any ſmell.

The Sechelles, being in a latitude ſimilar to the Moluccas, and preſenting ſome probability in favour of this ſpecies of cultivation, now attracted the attention of adminiſtration. Plants were conveyed thither with the utmoſt ſecrecy ; and as the negro-ſhips generally put in at the Iſle of Mahé, to procure water and turtle, care was taken to chooſe a place on the other ſide of the iſland, to prevent its being known, and they were depoſited near the royal creek, and abandoned to nature.

Their ſucceſs ſurpaſſed every hope ; the cinnamon-trees, particularly, ſpread with ſuch rapidity, that the canton wherever the lofty trees would permit them to grow, was ſhortly covered with them. The cloves and nutmegs ſucceeded alſo, but did not increaſe in the ſame proportion.

Things were in this ſtate when war was declared, in 1778, between France and England. Viſcount de Souillac, governor of the Iſles of France and Bourbon, with their dependencies, animated by a pure and well-directed patriotiſm, took every precaution to prevent the enemies of the ſtate from ſeizing on the precious reſult of ſo much labour, patience, and expenſe ; but the perſon charged with the execution of his orders was deficient in the judgment neceſſary for the execution of ſo important a commiſſion. Government had generally maintained a military poſt on this iſland ; but from the fear of its being ſurpriſed, it was diſcontinued

at the commencement of the war, and an overſeer only left there with a few blacks, whoſe orders were, to take the moſt effectual means of deſtroying the cinnamon-trees the moment the enemy ſhould attempt to take poſſeſſion of the iſland. Unfortunately, a large French ſhip from Madagaſcar put in to water at Mahé; and the overſeer, miſtaking her for an enemy, believing he ſhould be attacked, and fearful of not having time to execute his inſtructions, immediately ſet fire to the ſpice-trees, and deſtroyed them all.

Thus periſhed the hopes of the French government. The birds, however, which in general are fond of the fruit of the cinnamon-tree, had carried off a great number of berries, of which ſome had dropped accidentally in the woods of the interior of the iſlands, where they produced new plants, which were found there at the peace of 1783. Of theſe great care was taken; and when I viſited the iſland, the cinnamon, clove, and nutmeg-trees were in good condition, though not very numerous. There is no doubt that every kind of ſpice might be cultivated in the Sechelles-Iſlands; and France, notwithſtanding their little extent, derive from them a ſufficient quantity for the conſumption of the republic. No climate can be more favourable; and the inſtances I have cited inconteſtibly prove, that the ſucceſs would be complete. But, ſince the trials which have been made at Cayenne, it would appear that government has loſt ſight of the project of naturalizing them on theſe iſlands.

In 1790 grants of land were offered to any inhabitant of the Iſle of France who wiſhed to ſettle at Mahé, and ſoon the whole iſland was diſpoſed of; but no perſon at that time had fixed his reſidence either on the iſle of Praſlin or that of Frégates: and as to St. Anne's, government had united it to the

royal domains, to leave it for the uſe of ſhips reſorting to the port, who had liberty to land their crews for the benefit of their health, without the leaſt apprehenſion as to the other iſlands, with which, in caſe of contagion, all communication is cut off.

Theſe ſettlers finding it difficult to live, much more to enjoy themſelves, have neglected the ſpice-trees, and even deſtroyed them, that they might devote themſelves to the cultivation of rice, maize, manioc, cocoa-trees, and to fiſhing for turtle. This laſt article preſented ſo alluring a bait to their induſtry, by the profit it afforded, that they purſued it with an avidity which threatened in a ſhort time the deſtruction of the ſpecies. Government therefore interfered, and the fiſhing is now ſubject to reſtrictions. As theſe iſlands had been long uninhabited, the turtle came there in abundance to lay their eggs; but now, diſturbed by the inhabitants, they manifeſtly become every day more ſcarce. Government preſerves the females in an incloſure on the beach, where any one may be ſupplied for his own conſumption, but not for trade. This is an excellent reſource to veſſels whoſe crews are attacked by the ſcurvy. The males that are taken are always ſet at liberty.

Theſe iſlands produce alſo a kind of cocoa peculiar to themſelves, called ſea or twin cocoa; which is in requeſt through all Aſia, on account of its ſcarceneſs.

The ſoil of the Sechelles is new, and conſequently extremely fertile: indigo is indigenous there; all the plants proſper; horned cattle languiſh; but goats and pigs thrive; and poultry do well and become fat in a ſhort time. The rice has attracted the attention of cultivators, by its ſuperiority over any other in the world. Yet, notwithſtanding all

this, the colony, in its preſent ſtate, is of no value; and, though it holds out great advantages, is reduced to a mere proviſion-warehouſe for the ſmall number of veſſels that viſit it: nor can it be conſidered in any other light till a wiſe adminiſtration ſhall think proper to reſtore it to its firſt diſtination.

I made ſome remarks on turtle at theſe iſlands, which may perhaps give birth to conjectures on a fact that has not yet fixed the attention of naturaliſts.

Does the land-turtle, or tortoiſe, ever ſwim or undertake long paſſages by ſea? To throw light upon this queſtion, it may be uſeful perhaps to obſerve, that the Sechelles-Iſlands abound in this ſpecies of tortoiſe. How did they come there? Moreover, tortoiſes taken at the iſle of Praſlin, depoſited in the incloſure of that place, and marked on the back with a circle made by a cooper's ſcreeving iron, have been re-taken three leagues off on another iſland called *l' Iſle aux Cerfs*, near the barachouas of Mahé. Others, put into the incloſure of the Iſle aux Cerfs, and marked in a particular manner, have been retaken at Mahé, from which it is ſeparated by the bay and harbour, making at leaſt the diſtance of a league. This fact may be relied on: I mention it becauſe I never heard that theſe tortoiſes undertook ſuch long excurſions by ſea. The obſervation appears to me to be new, and I am anxious to communicate it to naturaliſts.

During my ſtay at the Sechelles I had nearly loſt my boat and thoſe of my crew who were in it. They ſuffered themſelves to be driven on the coaſt by a light breeze, which their puſillanimity rendered them unable to counteract. I feared they were carried out to ſea, where they would inevitably have periſhed; but, fortunately, they were brought back the next day. They had run aground near the plan-

tation of an inhabitant who cultivated cocoa, which they pillaged without mercy, carrying off three thouſand nuts, with which they laded the boat. The planter, whom I begged to ſet a value upon his loſs, was ſatisfied with thirty Spaniſh dollars, which I paid without heſitation.

Every thing being ready for my departure, I weighed anchor and ſtood to the north, keeping that courſe till I came within nine degrees north latitude, in order to paſs between the Laccadives and the Maldives. The day on which I reached the paſſage was marked by the loſs of a ſailor, a Manilleſe, who fell into the ſea while he was employed in bending a new fore-ſail. The poor fellow ſwam like a fiſh, and at firſt diverted himſelf by calling to each of the crew by name, inviting them to jump in and bathe with him. It was then about four o'clock in the afternoon, the wind began to freſhen, and the ſhip was going at the rate of little more than three miles an hour. The officer who had the watch put about in an inſtant; a hen-coop, ſome buoys and other things, were thrown overboard to aſſiſt him, but he jeſtingly diſdained them, hoping by dint of ſkill to come up with the veſſel. At laſt a caſk was hove out, with a lead-line faſtened to it of two hundred fathoms, to which I added upwards of four hundred fathoms of rope of different ſizes, but all to no purpoſe: he could not get hold of it, the wind and current driving the veſſel faſter than he could ſwim. As ſoon as he perceived the affair to be growing ſerious, he was ſeen to exert all his force, and every now and then to lift up his arms to ſhow himſelf.

Wiſhing to neglect no means of ſaving him, I had given orders for the boat to be hoiſted out: but, as it was extremely heavy, we found it impoſſible to do it ſoon enough. The Blacks of Manilla,

inſtead of lending a hand, remained upon the gangways gazing at their ſhip-mate, and calling to him in their language, which I did not underſtand; and neither blows nor exhortations could induce them to remain at the capſtan, to put about the ſhip.

A heavy ſea ſtriking us upon the beam made the veſſel roll ſo exceſſively, that all our efforts were ſcarcely ſufficient to ſecure the boat and prevent accidents; at length, about ſeven in the evening, when we were on the point of attaining our object, it became dark. We had now loſt ſight of the unfortunate ſwimmer for more than an hour and a half; and with ſuch miſerable ſailors I gave up the hope of recovering him, perſuaded that if I were to lower my boat in the night in ſo heavy a ſea to put to windward, I ſhould endanger the whole of its crew, particularly at a ſeaſon when we were every moment expoſed to a hurricane. Beſides, the experience I had had of the inactivity of the Blacks, in what they had done off the Iſle of Bourbon and at the Sechelles, convinced me, that their efforts would be of no avail; I therefore continued my courſe, leaving the unhappy wretch, who I had no doubt was by this time drowned, to his fate.

The tides during the ſouth-weſt monſoon are ſo violent between the Maldive-Iſlands and the Laccadives, that we are ſubject to loſe our reckoning, eſpecially if we are not able to make obſervations of longitude. To prevent groſs errors, and that a veſſel may not fall in unexpectedly with the land, which might be dangerous in the night, there is one remark to be made, which is rather of a ſingular nature.

After paſſing the meridian of the Maldives, and when we are between them and the coaſt of Malabar, there is ſeen on the ſurface of the water a great number of living ſerpents, floating without move-

ment, their bodies rolled up, the head erect, and the look ſtedfaſt. They begin to appear as ſoon as we get within the Maldives; but they are not very numerous till we arrive at about eight or ten leagues from the coaſt, and their numbers increaſe as we approach. It is ſuppoſed, that they are forced down the rivers of the coaſt of Malabar, which are ſwelled by the abundant rains that prevail at that ſeaſon, and which carry off with them whatever they meet in their paſſage. Theſe floods are ſometimes ſo conſiderable, that the ſea is tinged by them ſix or ſeven leagues from the ſhore.

Two days after loſing the Manilleſe I have mentioned, I diſcovered land about ſix in the evening. The weather was thick and cloudy, with rain and light airs at intervals. I found myſelf too near the coaſt and hauled my wind to ſtand off. I was borne by the currents with aſtoniſhing rapidity; in the evening the rain increaſed, and the wind fell quite calm. As, however, there was a very heavy ſwell, the ſhip rolled conſiderably, and the wet ſails, by beating againſt the maſts, were ſoon rent to pieces. It became neceſſary to unbend the topſails, and thus for a while to remain under bare poles, expoſed to whatever Heaven might pleaſe to ordain. While freſh ſails were bending, I ordered the lead to be hove conſtantly; and I ſaw with pleaſure, that the tide carried me on the courſe I wiſhed to go as accurately as if I had been able to manage the ſhip.

About eleven o'clock the ſwell became leſs, and in the courſe of a few minutes was completely gone: then the ſea ſeemed on a ſudden to be on fire. This phenomenon has been obſerved by ſeveral navigators, who have deſcribed it. I find it impoſſible to give an idea of its appearance: the light does not reſemble that produced by the track of a veſſel and

fiſh in phoſphoric ſeas; it is abſolutely fire, or at leaſt appears to be ſo, and it extends to the utmoſt limits of the horizon, ſo that the ſhip ſeems to ſwim on a burning ocean. The ſea was gently agitated, and each undulation foamed like the waves of a river when the wind ſets againſt the ſtream. It was this foam that ſparkled, each ſmall ſurge reſembling a body of fire.

The crew was very much terrified, and even the officers were alarmed. I explained the wonder, and told them, that it was by no means novel. I repeated what captain Cook had ſaid on the ſubject, and obſerved to them, that this phenomenon was particularly mentioned by navigators as common near the Maldives. Wiſhing to prove to them ſtill more ſatisfactorily that their fears were abſurd, and that they had not the leaſt danger to apprehend, the fire which they ſaw being nothing more, according to report, than a ſmall phoſphoric animal, I ordered a bucket of water to be drawn up and preſerved till the next day, intending to examine it with them attentively. The ſea appeared thus inflamed for the ſpace of half an hour, when it wholly diſappeared. The next day I inquired for the bucket of water, but it was not to be found; curioſity had fled with the fear of danger, and they preferred relying on my explanation, to giving themſelves the trouble of examining what could have cauſed the phenomenon. To my great regret I thus loſt an opportunity of making remarks on an object, which has juſtly excited the curioſity of the learned, and on which nothing ſatisfactory has yet been advanced. All that I was able to obſerve was, that as ſoon as the water was in the bucket it loſt its brilliancy, and differed in no reſpect from its ordinary appearance.

I continued my courſe, ſtanding for the ſouthern point of Ceylon; and, coaſting round that iſland, ar-

rived at Pondicherry nineteen days after my departure from the Iſle of France. I had the misfortune, in mooring ſhip, to caſt my anchor on the wreck of a veſſel, which had been ſo long under water, that no one was acquainted with the circumſtance. The reſult was, that I loſt it; and in endeavouring to get it up, I broke an entirely new fifteen-inch cable. M. de Rozili, commander of the frigates *La Meduſe* and *La Station*, gave me another to ſupply its place: he attempted alſo to recover mine; but by the effort he made he broke his tackle, and increaſed a leak in the fore part of his ſhip, that admitted two inches of water in an hour.

At the time of my landing at Pondicherry, that place, formerly the bulwark of the French in India, had been juſt evacuated by Mr. Conway: for which he was very much reproached. I am inclined to believe, that he did not merit it; but it is the fate which every foreigner, who has the chief command in a nation in a ſtate of rivality with that in which he was born, ought to expect. Mr. Conway was an Iriſhman; the evacuation of Pondicherry left the Engliſh maſters of India without oppoſition: it is therefore not ſurpriſing that ſuſpicion ſhould have fallen upon him.

The garriſon conſiſted only of two hundred European infantry, a company of artillery, part of which were Caffres, and a battalion of black Spahis or Cipahis. The park of artillery was evacuated, and all the ammunition ſent to the Iſle of France. It may be proper here to take a rapid glance at the policy of the French in India.

The power of the French company in Aſia was once equal to that of the Engliſh company. Madras ſubmitted to its arms under the command of La Bourdonnaie; and the genius of governor Dupleix fruſtrated all the attempts of its enemies on Pondi-

cherry : but from that time the power of France in India has continued to decline.

That able governor was well aware, that for any foreign nation to pretend to maintain itſelf in India as a military power, without being ably ſupported in the interior, either by allies, or by a ſovereignty over countries ſufficiently extenſive to raiſe reſpectable forces, was a vain chimera. He had already been elevated to the dignity of a nabob ; and if his recall to Europe had not arreſted the courſe of his proceedings, it is impoſſible to calculate the conſequences that might have reſulted, favourable to his own country, and injurious to its enemies. After his departure, the vaſt plans he had formed were given up, and every thing was concentred at the Iſle of France, where a place of arms was erected, and whence it was imagined, that, in caſe of neceſſity, the requiſite forces and ſupplies might be ſent to India, to maintain a footing of equality.

This ſyſtem was defective, as the event proved. Pondicherry was often taken : and the ſuccours ſent from the Iſle of France were always either inſufficient, or elſe arrived too late. But in Europe the blame was conſtantly thrown on thoſe charged with the operations, without its being felt, that, when acting upon ill-concerted plans, the reſults of courſe muſt be ever unpropitious.

In the war of 1778 the Mauritius again failed in endeavouring to ſave Pondicherry : notwithſtanding the vigorous defence of M. de Bellecombe, it was obliged to capitulate. Afterwards, when the forces under the command of M. de Buſſy arrived in India, the idea was relinquiſhed of re-eſtabliſhing that place, which it had been found impracticable to retain. He took poſſeſſion only of Goudelours and fort St. David, where the French eſtabliſhed themſelves, leaving Pondicherry open, and without

defence, a prey to the firſt that ſhould think proper to enter it.

That unfortunate town was deſtined to become a ſchool of fortification; for the Dutch and Engliſh have never failed, when they got poſſeſſion of it, to raze every thing at all connected with military defence; ſo that, when ceded to France after a war, it was always to be rebuilt. M. de la Bourdonnaie had given them an example of greater moderation when he took fort St. George at Madras. It is not my wiſh to reproach any nation unjuſtly: but it is certain, that the Engliſh have never taken but to deſtroy; and their conqueſts may be eaſily traced by the ruins ſcattered on the ſhores of India. They could not even ſpare the French lodge at Yanaon, a ſimple building, which they pulled down as far as the windows of the ground-floor, leaving the ruins to atteſt their deſtructive diſpoſition. Actuated by the ſame principles, after the laſt ſiege of Pondicherry, they not only razed the fortifications, but even the barracks for the troops. The French government had formerly given them ſome umbrage, and they now revenged themſelves upon the ſtones.

When the French company, exhauſted by loſſes, gave up its privelege, the royal adminiſtration took it into their own hands. It then appeared, that government was convinced of the neceſſity of oppoſing a counter-balance to the Engliſh power, which threatened to become what it is at preſent; and they endeavoured to open a negotiation with the republic of Mahrattas, the only power that could afford effectual ſupport. But petty means only were employed for this purpoſe: the company had ruined itſelf by profuſion, and now avarice became its ſubſtitute; no one dared to enter into engagements, and the agents of England, laviſh of their gold, promiſing much, threatening more, and mak-

ing themſelves reſpected by a force already become formidable, ſoon gained the aſcendancy. Again the Mauritius was reſorted to; and it was determined to make that place the centre of the French force to the eaſtward of the Cape of Good Hope.

At length, a deſerter from the black troops * in the garriſon of Pondicherry having made a large fortune, and laid the foundations of a conſiderable power, government ſeemed deſirous of reſuming the project of an alliance in the interior of the peninſula. The attachment of this man to France, and his irreconcilable hatred to England, who could never pardon his uſurpation, aſſured to the French the ſupport of the kingdom of Myſore. In the war of 1778, ſome judicious ſteps were taken: a French battalion, under the orders of M. de Coſſigny, ſeconded his ſon Tippoo Saib, who greatly diſtinguiſhed himſelf, from the hope of an irrevocable attachment to France. But all was to no purpoſe: Hyder Aly died; and his ſon, at the peace of 1783, was unmercifully abandoned.

Never was there a treaty ſo badly concerted; for the victories juſt gained by M. de Suffrein might have been turned to advantage, in obtaining an increaſe of territory and ſome places of importance; in a word, poſſeſſions that would have yielded a revenue. The Engliſh company at that time was not in a ſtate to refuſe a few ſacrifices; but, inſtead of their being demanded, matters were replaced on the ſame footing as before the war, the poſſeſſion of a ſmall territory in the environs of Karikal excepted; government had even the indiſcretion to give up Goudelours and fort St. David, thereby placing an enemy's fortreſs between the two French poſſeſſions. In ſhort, France ſeemed to have no other object in view than to obtain the

* Hyder Aly.

independence of the Engliſh colonies in America, and, ſatisfied on that ſcore, entirely neglected her eſtabliſhments in India. On the coaſt of Malabar ſhe obtained nothing; Mahé was reſtored to her, with the ſame territory as ſhe had poſſeſſed previouſly to the war. In Bengal, Chandernagore and its territory was alſo reſtored, without any thing being added; and it was even ſtipulated, that a ditch ſhould be ſunk to drain off the water. It is remarkable, that this ſtipulation is to be found in the former treaty of peace. Alſo the ruins of the citadel of this town, of which the victories of France ought to have obtained a renovation, were once more condemned to remain as they were, diſperſed over the deſerted country. The French were allowed indeed lodges for commerce; and they ſuppoſed themſelves to have made a maſter-ſtroke of policy in ſtipulating for the enjoyment of an unlimited trade in India. Thus, laying aſide the dignity of a great ſtate, they ſubmitted to play an inferior part, under the empire of Engliſh pride. They pretended not to feel how uſeleſs was the condition of an unlimited trade, without a ſufficient power to enforce the treaty, which the enemy might at any time elude and ſhackle by vexations and delays.

The event has proved how little dependence ought to have been placed on an engagement of this nature; for, a year after the peace, viſcount de Souillac, who was governor-general of the French eſtabliſhments, was conſtrained to ſign a ſeparate treaty with the Engliſh governors, by which the ſalt trade, the moſt lucrative in Bengal, was reduced to eight hundred thouſand *maunds*.—A maund is ſeventy-five pounds.

As to Tippoo Sultan, he was not ſo much as mentioned in the treaty, but was abandoned in ſilence to the reſentment of the Engliſh; and the

company would inſtantly have cruſhed him, but that it was deemed more adviſable to wait till the French army ſhould have quitted India, as it was not likely that ſo conſiderable a force would be kept on ſo ſmall a territory. This calculation appeared in the ſequel to be juſt.

Surpriſed at ſo diſadvantageous a peace, and alarmed at the ſmall degree of power retained by his allies in India, and the riſk he ſhould run if they were entirely to evacuate the country, that prince ſolicited ſome time after the ſupport of France by a ſolemn embaſſy, which he ſent to Verſailles; but it was too late. The French government had come to a reſolution to have only factors in India; the Iſle of France was again the place of arms, where all the forces were to be concentrated, and every where elſe the French were to appear only on the footing of merchants. This ſyſtem was ſupported with ſpecious arguments. The Engliſh, it was ſaid, will be on the loſing ſide; they will be charged with the defence of the country and all the expenſes of adminiſtration, while the French will have a trade without expenſe: they will have the trouble, and we the profit. In this manner did they deceive themſelves: no argument could convince them, that this diſadvantage was ſufficient to cauſe the French to be excluded from a country, where their power was annihilated, by a nation ſenſible of her means, knowing how to turn them to profit, and determined never to recede a ſtep when ſucceſs or power attends her. The embaſſy of Tippoo had no other effect than that of cauſing England to demand a categorical anſwer from France, as to the intention of ſuch a proceeding. To avoid diſpute, the latter played a double part, and leaned to both ſides, promiſing nothing certain to Tippoo, and ordering ſhortly after the evacuation of Pondicherry.

It was at this period that the firſt troubles broke out in Holland. France foreſeeing hoſtilities between the powers of Europe, and fearful of having a part in them, ordered Mr. Conway to take poſſeſſion of Trincomale, a port which inſures the ſuperiority of India to whatever power poſſeſſes it. That general had an army fully ſufficient for the expedition: the place was guarded by a French regiment in the ſervice of the Dutch company (the legion of Luxembourg); of this corps he was ſure: yet ſuch was the ill deſign or injudicious conduct of the general, that he totally failed, and, having done nothing, returned to Pondicherry, which he evacuated ſome time after.

During this expedition Pondicherry was left open and defenceleſs. The chevalier de Freſne, however, a very active and able officer, animated with ſentiments of honour, and attachment to the glory of his country, being commandant of the place, exerted himſelf ſo effectually, that in a ſhort time he covered the town on the northern ſide, and extended the fortifications to the gate of Vilnour, compriſing two-thirds of its circumference.

The general, returning from his fruitleſs cruiſe, to his aſtoniſhment found the town in a ſtate capable of making ſome defence. This circumſtance, certainly, was no reaſon for abandoning it; but, whatever were his motives, he took this opportunity of putting the orders he had before received into execution, and departed for the Iſle of France, followed by his forces and ſtores. Such precipitation raiſed the greater outcry againſt him, as he had been indiſcreet enough to take a journey to Madras to ſee one of his old friends—a circumſtance which malevolence did not fail to interpret to his diſadvantage. Every thing, in fact, conſpired to put the Engliſh company in poſſeſſion of Pondicherry. The

evacuation was ſo badly contrived, that this unfortunate colony was left without even a poſſibility of making uſe of the ſmall means of defence that remained: a few pieces of cannon were ſtill in its poſſeſſion; but the balls left behind were of a different caliber. The reſolution, however, of the chevalier de Freſne triumphed over every obſtacle: he obtained a reinforcement of two hundred infantry, formed and diſciplined a battalion of Sepoys, and ſucceeded in guarding the town.

Pondicherry has been always ill fortified; that is to ſay, defended on a bad ſyſtem: the object has conſtantly been to ſhelter the whole town, inſtead of building a ſtrong citadel, and making merely a ſimple curtain to put the town out of danger of an attack with cavalry. Madras is fortified in this manner, and the Engliſh have found the benefit of it. M. de Lalli's attempts on it were fruitleſs; the capture of the town did not advance him an inch towards the citadel, of which he was obliged to raiſe the ſiege.

Pondicherry is built in a circular form, on the borders of the ſea, the coaſts deſcribing a chord, of which the ramparts were the ſector. The radius is very conſiderable, as the ſector was dodecagon, giving thirteen baſtions and twelve ravelins, without reckoning the ſhore. A place like this requires a garriſon of thirteen thouſand men, according to M. de Vauban's ſcale of proportion, allowing five hundred men to each piece: and though the ſituation of the town, by facilitating its defence, may allow this number of troops to be in ſome degree diminiſhed, it muſt be obſerved, that I omit the ſea-ſhore, which, if fortified, ought to be made able to act againſt a fleet, which would require an additional number of men: ſo that, every allowance made, a garriſon of twelve thouſand men would at leaſt be

neceſſary to defend Pondicherry, according to the rules of art, againſt an enemy who might attack it methodically, with the ſame means as are employed in Europe. On the contrary, had a good pentagon, or even a fort royal, been conſtructed, fifteen hundred men would have been ſufficient; the expenſe of conſtruction too would have been diminiſhed; and it would have required a leſs quantity of artillery and ſtores.

Pondicherry is advantageouſly ſituated. Covered on the ſouth by the river Coupang, called in the Portugueſe language Arian-Coupang, it would be difficult to attack it regularly on that ſide. To the weſtward it is defended by an inundation, which would prevent the works neceſſary for an attack from being carried on, without infinite pains; and it would be difficult alſo to keep the water out of the trenches. Between this water and the Arian-Coupang are the road to Vilnour, and about three hundred toiſes of land; and here an attack might be made: but the vulnerable point of Pondicherry is to the north, as the country in that quarter is favourable for the neceſſary operations. An attack towards the gate of Vilnour muſt always be a feigned one, to engage or diſtract the attention: the true one muſt be to the north; and it is this point therefore which ſhould be principally ſecured. If the ſame ſyſtem of defence which has conſtantly been adopted be ſtill perſiſted in, if it be wiſhed to fortify the whole town, as has been hitherto the practice, I conceive that Cormontaigne's method could alone effectually defend it. M. de Freſne, deprived of the means of conſtructing regular fortifications, having no tools, no ſtones, no bricks, no wood to burn the latter, and no money, confined himſelf to works of earth, which he threw up according to the firſt method of Vauban, without

tenailles, but with a ravelin before each curtain; and as the earth in this country is apt to fly out, he gave to his ramparts a very great ſlope, and left at the foot of them a large berme to receive the earth that might fall down, and prevent it from filling up the ditch. The enemy having ſucceeded in draining the ditch during the ſiege which M. de Bellecombe ſuſtained, attempts were made to guard againſt the inconvenience, by digging deep enough to attain a level lower than the river Arian-Coupang and the ſheet of water; and ſecurity was thus obtained on that ſide. But though the ditch was deep and broad, the earth taken out was inſufficient to conſtruct the rampart as could have been wiſhed. The baſtions were not filled: they were accordingly leſs ſpacious, and did not afford to the party in poſſeſſion the means of entrenching themſelves.

At the time of my arrival in this town, the ſouth ſide was juſt finiſhed, but no covered way could be made, nor glacis that was tolerable: neither were there any paliſades; for though they had cut and bought ſome at Trincomale, they had neglected to bring them; and if I except the place of arms of the ravelin covering the gate of Vilnour, and a few re-entering angles on the north front, there was not a ſingle paliſade in the whole circuit of the town. Two gates were ſtill uncovered, without even a barrier; and the cauſeways acroſs the ditch, leading from theſe gates, were maſſive, with no draw-bridge, nor any thing capable of defending them. The quarter towards the ſea was open, and could oppoſe no other reſiſtance, in caſe of attack, than a ſmall battery, *à barbette*, uſed for ſalutes, except towards the north, where there was a front in which they had contrived a gate, covered by a miſerable ravelin. It was in this ſtate when the Engliſh attacked it the laſt time; and how it could

have held out thirteen days after the opening of the trenches is aſtoniſhing. No revetment was any where to be ſeen: by filling the ditch with faſcines, it might have been taken by ſtorm at the firſt onſet; while, by advancing methodically, the mining might have been carried on to the glacis in a ſingle day. The earth of that country is too light for mines to be effected without the aſſiſtance of maſons; for they would not anſwer in wood, and no time had been given for their conſtruction: the Engliſh knew very well that there were none there, and it is almoſt incredible that they ſhould have taken ſo much precaution in their approach, and have been obliged to make two attacks. The French at preſent would take a place like this in twelve hours.

As the king had ordered Pondicherry to be abandoned, the town would probably have been converted into a factory, if the talents of a ſingle individual had not preſerved it as a military place. The ſituation of the French in India was at that moment very precarious: Pondicherry was their chief eſtabliſhment; and its government extended over its own territory and that of Karikal, independently of other eſtabliſhments, which we ſhall proceed to deſcribe.

The two poſſeſſions of Pondicherry and Karikal, together, might bring in a revenue of a lack and a half of rupees, which is a very inſignificant ſum. A rupee is nearly fifty ſols; a lack is an hundred thouſand rupees: ſo that a lack and a half make about three hundred and ſeventy-five thouſand livres. This revenue was intended to ſuffice for the expenſe not only of thoſe two eſtabliſhments, but for that of others alſo that might require ſupport.

To the northward, at Maſulipatam, a lodge was eſtabliſhed, and an agent appointed, to facilitate the commerce of handkerchiefs. As this article is ſuf-

ficiently known, I ſhall not enlarge upon the ſubject :—ſo much for the coaſt of Coromandel.

Karikal furniſhed rice and ſome piece goods, ſuch as perculles, chittaras, &c. Pondicherry ſupplied Bengal with ſalt, and carried on a tolerable trade in blue dye. It was there that the white cloth ſent from the north was dyed blue, and which then took the name of guinea-cloth. There alſo were painted chittaras and handkerchiefs *à vignette* of all kinds and on every ſort of cloth. Moreover, what are called cambays, or white and blue linen, of different patterns were fabricated there, ſuch as chaſſelees, bajutapoes, neganepoes, tapſeils, fotes, corots, handkerchiefs, brawles, coſſelees, coupis, and other articles proper for trading with the Blacks, as well as a great quantity of white cloths known by the names of perculles and platilles. The dimities were procured at Goudelours. Theſe objects united might raiſe, on an average, annually, about twelve or fifteen hundred thouſand livres ; ſo that the trade was contained within very circumſcribed limits.

On the coaſt of Golconda, France poſſeſſed a conſiderable *aldée* called Yanaon, ſituate on the river Godwarin, where ſhe eſtabliſhed a chief, ſeveral factories, and a regular police. This aldée was very populous, being the principal mart of the French commerce in that country. It contained ſix extremely rich commercial houſes, without including the reſident, who was almoſt always a civil or military officer. Here the contracts were made for the white linen cloth fabricated in the neighbourhood, which was brought in a raw ſtate to Yanaon, where being bleached and packed up in bales, it was ſent down the ſmall river of Coringui, to the bay of the ſame name, where the ſhips received it.

From this aldée were obtained the linens called

four-threads, white and raw, and thoſe called conjons. Conjon is an aſſemblage of an hundred and twenty threads: as the width of the cloth never varies, the greater number of conjons there are in a piece, the finer the linens muſt be. They begin counting at fourteen; at twenty-ſix the cloth may be called fine; thirty makes very beautiful ſhirting; it becomes ſuperb at thirty-ſix, and at fifty it amounts to the *ne plus ultra*, beyond which they no longer count by conjons. The linen is then called baſtard, and is of a moſt admirable texture and fineneſs.

The linen of twenty-ſix conjons is the moſt ſaleable; it is worth, on an average, thirteen rupees a piece; but the baſtard cloth ought to ſell for ten pagodas.

To underſtand theſe Indian coins, it may be neceſſary to obſerve, that an hundred ſtar-pagodas, in the ordinary courſe of exchange, are worth from three hundred and fifty-four to three hundred and ſixty rupees of Pondicherry; the three-figured pagoda fetches two per cent. more, while that of Porta-Nova, the leaſt valuable of all, is ſometimes reduced to three hundred. The current value of the pagoda is nine livres.

The rupee of Pondicherry is not the higheſt in value, but it poſſeſſes the advantage of never varying. France has had the liberty of coining money ſince the period when M. Dupleix was inveſted with the title of nabob. The money was royal, and its ſtandard fixed by the ordinances of the king: the courſe of exchange was two hundred and thirteen rupees and a half for one hundred Spaniſh dollars. The rupee of Pondicherry is known by a creſcent over a mooriſh legend on one ſide. The ſicca rupee is the moſt valuable, and is known by a palm-tree; in general, two hundred of theſe are equal to a hundred dollars. The arcot rupee is an arti-

cle of traffic, and varies according to the demand for it.

Yanaon was certainly the place where France commercially had moſt to do. All her veſſels were conſigned to Yanaon, and the briſkneſs of trade naturally produced a great degree of affluence. It was the moſt conſiderable aldée of the north. The ſums laid out there in linen might amount, one year with another, in French and Engliſh commiſſions together, to twenty lacks of rupees, making nearly five millions of livres: to ſuch a ſtate was the commerce of the bay of Bengal reduced.

The government of Pondicherry extended alſo over the ſmall town of Mahé, ſituated on the coaſt of Malabar. This town, formerly ſtrong, populous, commercial, and the chief eſtabliſhment of the French on that coaſt, is now reduced to nothing; it has experienced the ſame fate as every other place conquered by the Engliſh, namely, that of ſeeing its walls razed to their foundations. France has never thought of rebuilding them, and has conſequently kept no military force there: the town has remained in a ſtate of dullneſs and inactivity, increaſed by the vicinity of fort Talichery, whence the Engliſh continually menace it, and by means of which they may be conſidered as maſters of it.

The trade of Mahé conſiſts of pepper and beetle-nuts. It alſo produces a light kind of earth which ſerves to filter water; and which the natives have the art of making ſo thin and fine, that many of them, particularly women, in the habit of thus regaling themſelves, do not heſitate to eat it. This earth is extremely ſpongy, and readily abſorbs any liquid, without loſing its conſiſtency; and it often happens, after preſerves have been ſerved up on plates made of it, that the ſyrup remains imbibed, and the ladies eat them.

The beetle-nut is in great requeſt throughout India: it reſembles a nutmeg, in ſize as well as contexture and ſhape, without poſſeſſing either its taſte or fragrance. The inſide is of a lively red colour, and has an agreeable flavour; the Indians in general conſume a great quantity of theſe nuts.

The town of Chandenagore and the lodges of Bengal, ſuch as thoſe of Balaſſore, Patna, Dacca, and Chatigam, are alſo dependent on Pondicherry; and theſe places, with the large villages of Mahé and Karikal, the aldée or village of Yanaon, the houſes of Maſulipatam, with a revenue of about four hundred and twenty thouſand livres, of which three hundred and ſeventy-five thouſand aroſe from land, conſtituted the whole of the French power on the two coaſts of India and in the province of Bengal.

To ſuch a ſtate was the nation reduced which formerly in this part of the globe vied with England in ſplendour; whilſt her rival ſaw her flag hoiſted on three principal fortreſſes, that ſecured to her the peaceable poſſeſſion of the provinces ſhe had acquired, and in which ſhe ſupported, in 1791, including Blacks and Europeans, a force of twenty-five thouſand men.

Having thus deſcribed the ſituation of the French in India, anterior to the preſent war, I ſhall add a few details on their coaſt eſtabliſhments, before I ſpeak of Bengal.

Though Trincomale does not belong to France, is on the coaſt of Ceylon, and not on that of India, yet as it is ſituated in the bay of Bengal, as the French flag was flying there for ſome time, as it is become famous by the efforts of admirals Suffrein and Hugues, and as it is beſides of extreme importance in time of war, the ſuperiority in India depending on the poſſeſſion of it, I ſhall begin with that town.

Trincomale, or Trinkenomale, belongs to the

Dutch, or at leaſt was theirs before the preſent war, that nation, by a treaty with the king of Ceylon, being in poſſeſſion of the whole coaſt of that iſland. It was alternately taken and retaken during the war of 1778, and at laſt remained with the French, who faithfully reſigned it to the Dutch company at the peace of 1783.

The reputation of this town is certainly above its real value. The fort, properly ſpeaking, conſiſts but of a front fortification on the method of Marolois; it is in fact nothing more than a horn-work, whoſe two branches terminate on a mountain, at the foot of which it is ſituated, and by which it is defended behind; ſo that Trincomale can only be attacked on one ſide. The two branches of the horn-work are defended by the ſea; or, to make myſelf better underſtood, the mountain of Trincomale is a large peninſula ſeparated from the main land by an iſthmus not exceeding two hundred toiſes in width, and which is barred by a front fortification. And this is the place that has made ſo much noiſe. Behind the fortification, at the foot of the mountain, is what is called the town, conſiſting of three ſmall rows of houſes, which form two ſtreets. Near the foot of the mountain is alſo a well of very good water, the more valuable as there is no other truly drinkable to be found in the country. From the ſituation of this fortreſs, it would only be neceſſary to diſembark a body of troops ſtronger than the garriſon, and appear before the place, to blockade and ſtarve it out. Its ſole advantage is the being built on a rock, ſo that it can never be approached by mining, which muſt terminate about fifty toiſes from the foot of the rampart. When M. de Suffrein took it, there were no advanced works, except indeed a ſhapeleſs heap of earth, incapable of concealing in every part the bot-

tom of the wall; ſo that the battering cannon, once mounted, might have been directed advantageouſly, without the trouble of a regular approach. The enemy did not wait for this, but ſurrendered in good time.

The Dutch major Von-baur has ſince remedied this inconvenience. That intelligent officer, with infinite patience, procured earth from other parts, and formed therewith a counterſcarp and a good ditch. He conſtructed a ravelin, of neceſſity very ſmall, as the line of defence is extremely ſhort. The whole is ſurrounded by a good covered way, well palliſaded, and a glacis, by means of which it would be more eaſily defended againſt a ſudden aſſault. The chief defect of the place is its ſituation.

Trincomale preſents one of thoſe ſtriking traits which characteriſe the genius of a nation. In the hands of an active and energetic government, it would have become an impregnable fortreſs. It might have ſecured to its maſters the poſſeſſion of the whole coaſt of Coromandel, from which it is diſtant only twenty-four hours ſail; it would have ſerved as a rallying point, both againſt the powers of India and thoſe of Europe; it would have been an arſenal whence they might have derived every means of attack and defence in the peninſula; and its harbours and road would have admitted of a formidable naval eſtabliſhment: in a word, Trincomale, in the poſſeſſion of an enterpriſing nation, might have become the capital of India. Calcutta, which now enjoys that pre-eminence, is ſituated much leſs favourably for war.

Inſtead of feeling theſe advantages, the Dutch contented themſelves with making it a ſmall poſt juſt capable of defending them from any ſlight attack. Nature held out to them the means of rendering it a ſecond Gibraltar; for by building a large

citadel on the top of the mountain it would have been rendered inacceſſible. This mountain is ſo ſteep as to be nearly perpendicular on every ſide; it is formed like a tortoiſe, and would admit of a very extenſive town. By digging wells in the rock, water would have been found in abundance; it might have contained magazines of proviſions for the ſervice of a year or more; from its height it would have been ſheltered from the *ricochet* and enfilade; and, in ſhort, would have protected ſo effectually the back bay, that it might have blown to atoms any fleet daring enough to caſt anchor in it. Inſtead of adopting a plan like this, the firſt ſettlers, ſtruck with the facility of barring the iſthmus of which I have ſpoken, and of entrenching themſelves at the foot of the mountain againſt the natives of the country, imagined they could do nothing better than conſtruct in haſte a front fortification; and even in doing this they followed a defective method, then in vogue, and which was merely ſufficient to defend them againſt the Blacks of Candy. This work, very ſolidly built of ſtone, muſt have coſt a conſiderable ſum of money; and when the Europeans at length became rivals in the ſeas of India, and had a mutual wiſh to diſpoſſeſs each other, the Dutch company, actuated by petty mercantile views, adhered to it from avarice. If they were to alter the ſyſtem of defence, and eſtabliſh themſelves on the mountain, what had already been expended would be wholly loſt; and they ſacrificed every thing to ſo trifling a conſideration. They continued, as well as they could, to meliorate their actual ſituation, and were far from wiſhing to form an expenſive eſtabliſhment, whilſt the one in queſtion was not only already completed, but alſo required, from the nature of the fortification, only very ſmall means for its defence and ſupport. Such a ſyſtem

of economy was clear gain in the eyes of a people, who, extending their views no further than the mechaniſm of trade, conſider details merely without looking to important reſults. Hence, notwithſtanding all that nature had done to render it celebrated, the port of Trincomale was condemned, from the inſenſibility of its maſters, to remain in obſcurity.

When we take a view of the iſland of Ceylon, and reflect on the ſituation of the Dutch eſtabliſhments there, we are unable to gueſs for what reaſon they ſhould fix their principal reſidence at Colombo, and why ſo wretched a port ſhould have been made the capital of the iſland, inſtead of Trincomale. Is it poſſible they could have been induced to ſuch a meaſure by the pearl-fiſhery in the gulf of Manar? That fiſhery is now ſo much reduced, that they might eaſily have judged how very defective ſuch views would have been. If the cultivation of ſugar in that neighbourhood was their reaſon, they might have obtained the ſame advantage at Trincomale. How could they neglect to fix the centre of their power in this port, by which they might have preſerved their colonies of Palliacata and Sadras, and eſpecially that of Negapatam, which they have ſeen transferred to the hands of their enemies? That they have kept the two firſt is ſimply owing to their poſſeſſions, in the ſtate to which they are reduced, having become of no conſequence. Palliacata, too near Madras, has ſeen its commerce ſwallowed up by the latter, even to its beautiful manufacture of handkerchiefs; and Sadras is now nothing more than a village mouldering behind the ruins of a fortreſs, the ramparts of which, diſlocated by mines, ſtill exhibit their former ſtrength. The dwellings of the interior, unroofed and ſtripped, have the appearance of houſes deſtroyed by fire; a ſpectacle common enough

in places conquered by the Engliſh, and to which the traveller who viſits the country muſt accuſtom himſelf.

The fort of Trincomale not being large enough to contain all thoſe who might have wiſhed to ſettle there if the eſtabliſhment had been proſperous, and ſcarcely affording ſufficient room for the garriſon, a piece of land was marked out for building a town on the outſide, on the plain which ſeparates the back bay from the harbour. But, with the exception of an extenſive row of trees, uſed for the *bazar* or market-place of the Blacks, the town has remained imaginary; for I cannot call by that name a few gardens for the cultivation of tobacco, and three houſes, with about thirty huts. This is a natural effect of the monopoly of the Dutch company, which not only refuſed to encourage commerce themſelves, but even prevented induſtrious men from ſettling in their eſtabliſhments.

At the end of the war of 1778, the French had begun, in ſome meaſure, to enliven trade at Trincomale. Cinnamon was eaſily procured there. Now that port has nothing to offer for ſale; and when I put in there, on my return, with the *United Friends*, a ſhip which I commanded in 1792, I could not procure the leaſt refreſhment, though I had many articles which the commandant was anxious to obtain, and though the adminiſtration was in the greateſt want of opium for the Malays living there *. As the country afforded no article

* The natives of the peninſula of Malacca are in the habit of eating a great quantity of opium, of which they are very fond: the effect it produces on them is a furious drunkenneſs. Thoſe who take too large a doſe fall into a paroxyſm of rage, from which death alone can relieve them: for this reaſon the government keep men in pay at Malacca, whoſe employment is to patrole the ſtreets on feſtivals, and who are always within call, ſhould a man intoxicated with opium appear in the ſtreets: if any one be ſeen in this ſitua-

of exchange except ſome bad tobacco cultivated in the neighbourhood, I could do no buſineſs. Money beſides was not known among them, and they had nothing to offer me in payment but the company's notes, which I could not poſſibly accept.

Notwithſtanding this ſtate of penury, the eſtabliſhment at the time I was there had an appearance of vigour. The king of Candy having refuſed to fulfil his treaty for cinnamon, and having deſtroyed beſides from diſſatisfaction a great number of trees, which were too contiguous to the Dutch eſtabliſhments, the company had reſolved to march an

tion, they purſue and kill him without mercy. But for this precaution, theſe madmen would commit the moſt terrible exceſſes, and though the utmoſt activity is uſed, it is often impoſſible to prevent accidents. They are generally armed with a poniard which they call *kriſi* or *krick*, the blade of which is half an inch broad and about eight inches long; it is made in a ſerpentine form, and leaves a wound at leaſt two inches wide, which it is hardly practicable to probe, on account of the ſinuoſities occaſioned by the inſtrument. This weapon is the more terrible from being poiſoned. Its blade is always covered with greaſe, in which it is ſuppoſed they boil the green wood of the *mancenilier*. The effect of this poiſon is ſo ſure, that it is impoſſible to eſcape; a wound made with it is certain death. They carry this kriſt in a wooden ſheath, the blade being ſecured ſo as to avoid all friction, and preſerve the poiſon with which it is covered, and which time, the general deſtroyer, ſeems to improve; at leaſt the older it grows, the more rapidly it acts.

To form an idea of the rage and fury with which this opium inſpires them, we ſhould ſee them, in their combats on board pirate veſſels, receive a lance through their bodies, and not being able to draw it out, take hold of it, and plunge it further in, to be able to get at their enemy, and ſtab him with their kriſt; a ſpecies of ferocity that obliges ſhips in danger of falling in with them to provide themſelves with lances that have a guard through the middle of the ſhaft, by means of which they keep them off and ſuffer them to die at the end of the weapon without daring to draw it out till theſe furious beings have breathed their laſt.

The Dutch, by arming them with muſkets, have rendered them tolerable ſoldiers, and ſubſtitute them inſtead of Sepoys: they are ſtationed at almoſt all their eſtabliſhments; and it is ſeldom that Trincomale is without ſome companies of them.

army againſt him, and the governor-general of the iſland had in conſequence ſent a reinforcement from Colombo. The number of white troops amounted nearly to a thouſand men, which gave to the place a conſiderable appearance of life and activity; but as to the road, my ſhip was the only one to be ſeen at anchor there.

Independently of the fort of Trincomale, the Dutch have built another for the defence of the port. This is on a mountain; and if they had taken half the pains with the firſt, which they have beſtowed, at clear loſs, on the ſecond, they would have ſucceeded in making it a place capable of reſiſtance. This fort is called Oſtembourg, from the name of the mountain on which it is built: it is ſimply an oval, without angles or any thing whatever to flank. The battery is intended to cover the harbour; and the ſituation in reality is well choſen for the purpoſe, and, had it been differently conſtructed, might have been of very great ſervice, though, on account of its elevation, the ſhot thrown from it muſt loſe the advantage of riſing again when they touch the water, and alſo that of raking the enemy, which is very much againſt it. But, by a moſt aſtoniſhing want of judgment in a nation known to be conſiderate, the only mountain not acceſſible is that on which they have neglected to build; while they have conſtructed a defective fort, at a great expenſe, on an eminence to which it is practicable to climb, and on which artillery may be mounted out of reach of their guns. They have not even cleared away the woods, under ſhelter of which it is eaſy to advance within ten toiſes of the rampart. The engineer (I humbly beg pardon for calling him ſo) who fortified Oſtembourg ſeemed nevertheleſs to have had an idea that it might be attacked on the mountain ſide; for, in-

ſtead of terminating his fort circularly on that ſide, as in every other part, he formed a ſtrait line, which barred the whole breadth of the mountain. Had he underſtood what he was about, he might have reaped great advantages from its ſituation; in reality he ſhould have cleared away all the wood within cannon-ſhot, have formed an eſplanade with it, and then, throwing up entrenchments and paliſading them, have oppoſed a regular front to an attack. It had the advantage of not being able to be turned, and of defiling the faces of the baſtions, which could never have been attacked but in front. But it was never ſuppoſed that it would enter the imagination of an enemy to approach this place by land, and nothing was thought of but erecting a battery for the harbour. M. de Suffrein, however, proved that an attack on the ſide of the mountain was practicable, for it was on that ſide that he took it.

Whatever be the defects of this fort, it coſt in the conſtruction a great deal of money. A number of uſeleſs works were erected, and among the reſt an enormous ciſtern; whereas, with the eighth part of the expenſe, a well might have been ſunk in the mountain, which is only compoſed of ſoft rough ſtone, and water would have been found at a very little depth, as it is met with in ſome places half way up the declivity.

The mountain of Oſtembourg is one of thoſe vaſt calcareous maſſes riſing in this canton, between which the ocean has left paſſages and openings, which at preſent form magnificent bays and an excellent harbour. It is of an oblong form, ſteep at one extremity, and at the other gradually ſloping off towards the plain; it projects into the grand baſon which forms the harbour, and divides it into two parts, Nicholſon-bay being on one ſide, and Oſtembourg-road on the other.

The paſſage for entering the harbour is towards the ſteep extremity, at the foot of which, near the edge of the water, is erected a raking battery, which would have an excellent effect if it could be ſheltered from the ſplinters which the enemy's ſhot would ſever from the mountain. This battery however, the fort of Oſtembourg, and that of Trincomale, having no communication with each other, and no intermediate poſts, can render no mutual ſupport; they are beſides without defiles into the interior of the country, by which to obtain ſubſiſtence after the enemy has made good his landing. They ſtand therefore iſolated and apart, and muſt defend themſelves ſeparately as well as they can.

The harbour of Trincomale is certainly very ſuperb; and to judge of it from the accounts that have been given, it would ſeem to require nothing to render it perfect; there are, however, inconveniences belonging to it which it is proper ſhould be made known.

The principal bay is immenſe; but it has no anchorage, and is ſcarcely navigable. To enter the port, a ſhip muſt work acroſs it; which is in ſome meaſure dangerous, as there are many rocks, ſome of which are eight or ten feet only below the ſurface of the water, which renders it neceſſeary to have a pilot; to obtain whom you firſt come to anchor in what is called the Back-bay, under the fort of Trincomale, where there is very good ground. Of all the creeks and bays of the eſtabliſhments, this would be the beſt, if there was any ſhelter in the bad ſeaſon during the north-eaſt monſoon; but it is then not tenable, and you muſt get into port.

During the ſouth-weſt monſoon it is the only place frequented by ſhips, becauſe there is anchorage on each tack; and when they wiſh to depart, they may be out at ſea in an inſtant without diffi-

culty. Nevertheleſs, as this little bay is not ſheltered, there is always a great ſwell in it, which makes the veſſels roll, and renders it impoſſible to careen them.

The inner part of the great bay affords an anchorage near the river Cotiar; but there is this inconvenience attending it, that frequently, during the ſouth-weſt monſoon, a veſſel may beat a whole day without getting in ſo far: in which caſe, as there is no anchorage any where elſe, it is obliged to return to the Back-bay to recommence on the morrow its attempts. An equal difficulty is found during the north-eaſt monſoon in getting out; and this is the more to be dreaded, as, after a whole day ſpent in the attempt, night may bring on a ſtorm, and expoſe the veſſel to the danger of periſhing on the coaſt, from which it may not have been able to make a ſufficient offing.

When we have ſucceeded in getting to the further end of the bay, we put about for the harbour, and come to anchor at Oſtembourg-point. The ſhore of that mountain is ſo bold, that a boat run aground at the head will have fourteen fathom water at the rudder: at half a cable's length there will be thirty-three fathom.

This baſon is very improperly called the harbour: it is rather an immenſe bay, where ſhips are moored acroſs, and where there is a heavy ſwell, though it is landlocked on every ſide; but the bay is ſo extenſive, that the leeward ſide is always very much agitated. The middle of the bay has a ſoft clay bottom, in which anchors ſink ſo deep as to render it impoſſible to recover them. Further on, towards the inmoſt part of the harbour, is a rock of no ſmall extent; but the bay is ſo large and ſo little frequented, that there is more than ſufficient room for ſuch veſſels as wiſh to enter it. The inconvenience of

not being able to get in without beating to windward must be extremely disagreeable to a vessel in any kind of distress. Should she be leaky, with only a few hands, exhausted by fatigue, the inconvenience must be considerably increased by being obliged to spend a day or more in tacking to arrive at the careening-place; and if the rigging be bad, this becomes impossible: she must then of necessity bring up in a great depth of water in the Back-bay, till assistance arrives, by which she may be enabled to enter the harbour; which must greatly retard her operations.

There is the same disadvantage for a ship of war after an engagement. If totally dismasted, it is impossible for her to get in under jury-masts; and if the hull also be impaired, she cannot obtain the smallest relief; for in the Back-bay, the only place where she could be moored, there would be no possibility of her refitting. In addition to these inconveniences the vastness of the harbour must be considered. During the south-west monsoon vessels are careened at the greater island; but if a breeze spring up in the offing or in the north-east, their position must be instantly altered, for the sea swells so suddenly, that they would be in considerable danger. During the other monsoon the careening is done in Nicholson's-bay, but that is no better sheltered; and in *l'Anse des Cours*, where there is also anchorage, there is the same disadvantage. These different places, besides, are above three miles distant from each other, and six from the fort of Trincomale. How difficult, or at least expensive, it would be, provided they could mutually assist one another, to form establishments in each, may easily be conceived. Some miserable storehouses, indeed, have been constructed at the foot of the mountain of Ostembourg, and, supposing an establishment were

formed there, ſufficient for the operations of a conſiderable port, the difficulty would remain to find a place where ſhips might be built and launched. For the reſt, the principal diſadvantage of this port is the want of good water: except a ſmall ſpring at the foot of the mountain of Oſtembourg, towards Nicholſon's-bay, there is none ſcarcely to be found. The other ſprings afford but little, and are drained by the natives. During the war of 1778 we were obliged to ſupply ourſelves from the river Cotiar, which is nine miles diſtant, as all the wells about Trincomale were brackiſh and unwholeſome. Notwithſtanding all this, the harbour is an ineſtimable benefit; for there is no other in this part of India, and the poſſeſſion of it is of the higheſt importance.

The environs of Trincomale are uncultivated. About fifteen miles from the fort is a fountain of warm water. It jets out in two places. One of the ſources is too hot to be borne; the other is of a moderate heat; and twenty feet from the latter riſes a ſpring of cold water.

The woods with which this country is covered are near the town. It would be imprudent to enter them unarmed, as they abound in buffaloes, elephants, and tigers, to which Buffon gives the name of *ounce*: there are alſo a great number of monkeys there. The river Cotiar is near a lake, where the wild elephants frequently reſort to bathe. Our ſailors often had ſkirmiſhes with them.

The ſouthern coaſt of the great bay is terminated by Sale-point; it abounds in peacocks and quails, but there is very little ſhooting, on account of the wild beaſts, which there is danger of falling in with. Mr. Sonnerat found there what is called the primitive cock, and which Buffon maintains to be the golden pheaſant. I ſaw one of them in Mr. Caſenove's garden at Pondicherry. Mr. Sonnerat ſhewed me anoth.

er ſtuffed, a moſt beautiful bird, the feathers of which were all covered with gold-coloured ſpots. He has given a deſcription of it that is accurate, to which the reader may refer.

On a ſmall rock called the Chapel are oyſters, and it is the only place where they are to be found. Cattle are ſo ſcarce at Trincomale, that a ſmall piece of beef is a diſh of the greateſt value. While the French were maſters of it, they introduced a ſpecies of goats, called maroon dogs, which at that time formed the chief ſupply of the kitchen. But theſe flocks are inſenſibly exhauſted; and when I returned there, nothing was to be had but fiſh and cheeſe. The commandant having done me the honour of inviting me to dinner, gave me nothing elſe, and for drink all he had to offer his gueſts was grog made of arrack and water. At the deſſert indeed there were ſerved up, as a dainty, a bottle of brandy and another of gin, accompanied with the ſame demonſtrations as are uſed at Paris in offering a glaſs of hermitage or tokay. In a word, ſuch was the miſery of the country, that even a candle was a luxury, and there was nothing but oil of cocoa to ſubſtitute in its ſtead.

Ceylon may in a manner be conſidered as the country of cocoa nuts, the iſland being almoſt covered with the trees: it alſo produces very excellent rice, and towards the ſouthern part, in the neighbourhood of *Punto Gallo* and Colombo, the Dutch cultivate ſugar. Theſe three articles together produce a conſiderable trade; they ſerve to make arrack, of which a great quantity is exported to different parts of India, and cocoa-hair, which is uſed in forming cables for ſhips.

The manners of this canton being nearly the ſame as thoſe of the coaſt of India, I ſhall paſs on to Pondicherry, taking a flight glance at the village of Karikal.

This poſſeſſion is a ſmall aldée to the ſouth of the Daniſh ſettlement at Trinkebar. The French government keeps a military commandant there, with a detachment of troops of colour. Its principal product is *nely*, a name given to rice when it is ſimply threſhed, without being diſengaged from its outer ſkin. This nely ſerves for the conſumption of Pondicherry. The eſtabliſhment of Karikal, in common with other parts of the coaſt, makes ſalt, which the French carry to Bengal. The government of Pondicherry gives *bons*, or permits, every year, to tranſport it into that province, to the amount, in quantity, of eight hundred thouſand maunds, or ſixty millions weight: it muſt be delivered to the Engliſh company, who engage to take it at a certain price before agreed on, and pay in ready money: if any be ſent without ſuch permit, it is confiſcated; or if more than eight hundred thouſand maunds, the quantity ſtipulated by the contract, be ſent, it is alſo ſeized: any perſons attempting to introduce ſalt into Bengal, and ſelling it to the natives, are puniſhed as defrauders. Theſe permits form a part of the riches of the French government, in addition to its territorial revenue. A portion of them is ſet apart for the ſupport of widows, orphans, and the poor. The reſt are ſold to individuals, and the produce goes into the coffers of government.

From the ſouthern point of the coaſt of Coromandel to the Palm-tree Point, which terminates the bay of Balaſſore, it is impoſſible to make good a landing in European boats. The ocean, which, for a long continuity of ages has ſucceſſively retired, both from the mountains of the Gauts, and the plain on which they are elevated, is daily raiſing the coaſt, which it inſenſibly abandons; it is continually amaſſing ſand and wrecks of marine pro-

ductions over its whole extent, of which it gradually forms a bank, deſtined at ſome future day to become the coaſt, againſt which it will again throw up other banks. Theſe ſands form what is called the bar; againſt which the ſea is almoſt conſtantly beating with great fury. The extremities of the waves which paſs over the bank lodge between it and the ſhore, where they form new waves. The alternate movement of the ſurge, which tends to undermine the ſhore, and the retrograde movement of theſe waves, ſeeking to re-unite themſelves with the maſs of the ſea, occaſion an excavation between the bank and the coaſt. This ſpace, about piſtol-ſhot wide, makes what is called the *reſſac* of the bar. As it is only the top of the wave which paſſes over the bank forming the bar, the depth of water is not more than a foot, and is often leſs. The ſurge ſometimes riſes conſiderably above it, and breaks with violence. An European boat, attempting this paſſage, would run the riſk of touching on the bank, and of being ſwallowed up by the waves. To prevent this, flat-bottomed boats called *chelingues*, are conſtructed, without beams, and which have the planks ſewed together, inſtead of being nailed. This formation gives them more elaſticity, allows them to bend when they are ſtruck by the ſurge, and prevents them from being ſo eaſily ſtove as other boats: they are ſo flat, that they do not draw when loaded above ſix inches water, and ſome not even ſo much; they are extremely high at the ſides, ſeldom leſs than four feet, ſo that when the ſurf overtakes them, as it cannot reach over the ſide, they are in leſs danger of being filled. They are generally manned with nine Blacks, and when the ſea runs high with eleven. The perſon who ſteers ſtands up abaft, and is furniſhed with an extremely large oar, with which he endeavours to

keep the end of the boat always towards the wave. Long experience points out to them that all waves are not of equal ſtrength, and that after three heavy ones there will at leaſt ſucceed one leſs violent. They watch their opportunity and are ſeldom deceived. Floating along on that which they deem to be the moſt manageable, they follow it up, with the foam conſtantly a-head of their chelingue. The reſt of the wave, ſtill ſwelling, affords them ſufficient water to clear the bank, and they arrive thus in perfect ſafety, purſued by another wave, which breaks behind them upon the bar, but unable to overtake them, is no impediment to their attaining the landing-place. Great, however, as their ſkill may be, they do not always ſucceed; ſometimes they are deceived in the ſwell, or they ſteer badly, or elſe are not in good trim; and they are then ſurpriſed by the ſurf, upſet, and every thing contained in the chelingue is tumbled into the ſea. As they are all excellent ſwimmers, they lay hold of the Europeans, and ſave them, but the goods are in danger of being loſt.

To guard againſt a misfortune like this, when large ſums of money are confided to them, or other articles of value, they tie a rope to them, and fix at the end of it a buoy, by which they know where the effects are, and are able to recover them.

When the ſea runs ſo high that they are apprehenſive of an accident, they add to theſe precautions that of providing a *catimaron* to accompany their chelingue. This is a bundle of three pieces of wood tied together with cords. Their width prevents them from upſetting, and, as they have no interior capaciouſneſs, they cannot ſink. The Blacks ſeat themſelves on this ſort of raft, with their legs bent under them, ſometimes relieving themſelves from ſo tireſome an attitude by letting them hang

over in the water. There have been inſtances of ſharks carrying off ſome of theſe men from the reef when in their general attitude, whether on their knees or ſitting down; the ſea waſhes them to the middle of their bodies; the only dry part is the head, on which therefore they carry the papers that are confided to them, in a cap made for the purpoſe.

On veſſels of this frail deſcription the natives of India, and particularly the iſlanders of the Andamans and the Straits, undertake long voyages. They put a maſt to this wretched catimaron, and fix to it a weight, which ſerves to counterbalance an enormous ſail, and prevent their upſetting; thus equipped, they make way with aſtoniſhing celerity. If any accident happens, they have recourſe to ſwimming, and, like ſo many fiſhes, as if the element was natural to them, put their machine to rights, on which they ſeat themſelves again, and continue their voyage.

When we arrive on the coaſt of India, the firſt objects we diſcern are the flags of the town we approach: they are ſeen floating on the ſea, as though they had emerged from its boſom. The coaſt is low, that it is not perceptible till we are near it, the mountains being too diſtant from the ſhore to be ſeen out at ſea.

This plain, which extends from the borders of the ſea to the Gauts, is ſo flat, that the rivers have ſcarcely any current, and even at their mouths are ſo little rapid, that the ſea throws up a bar in the ſame manner as in other parts; thus cloſing the rivers, and leaving the water to filter through the ſand. In the rainy ſeaſons they ſwell, riſe above the bank by which they are cloſed, and open for themſelves a paſſage, which the ſea again fills up as ſoon as the body of water is run off. I ſpeak, as

may be ſuppoſed, of ſmall rivers only, and not of thoſe which are deep enough to admit ſhips.

This want of elevation in the coaſts but ill agrees with the ſuppoſed antiquity of the country. The number of rivers, the lakes by which they are ſupplied, the ſoil, that in many places is nothing but ſand, all ſeem to indicate, that, at no very remote period, it was covered by the ocean. Not the leaſt elevation can be diſcovered till we arrive at Pondicherry, and thence, to the north of Sadras, only a few hills are perceptible, which muſt have been iſlands when the ocean covered the plain.

If we conſider the ſhallowneſs of the gulf which ſeparates Ceylon from the coaſt, and the chain of rocks that re-unites them, over which nothing but pirogues can now paſs, we may venture to affirm, without temerity, that in the courſe of twelve centuries, Ceylon will be no longer an iſland, allowing to this part of the world the ſame progreſſive diminution as we have obſerved in the Baltic, namely, forty-five inches to a century. The calculation would be juſt; for there is only nine fathom water in the deepeſt part of the gulf. By admitting a ſimilar anterior diminution in the ocean, it would follow, that India is not now as it was in the time of Alexander, and that the plain on which Pondicherry and Madras are built was then under water.

There are monuments of men exiſting in this country, however, which bear marks of great antiquity. I here anticipate my excurſion, in order to preſent facts at variance with the ſyſtem, that a juſter opinion may be formed.

In aſcending the Godwarin, about nine miles above Yanaon, we meet with a ſmall Indian town called Cota, the reſidence of a raja. Hence directing our courſe a little to the eaſtward, we arrive at

a conſiderable Mooriſh aldée named Datcharom. The ſituation of this place is not elevated; on the contrary it is ſurrounded with water, and conſequently could not have been freed from the empire of the ocean till ſome ages after the preſent coaſt: yet in this aldée we find a very beautiful pagoda, which muſt formerly have been a ſtrong place; it is defended by a wide and deep ditch, the degraded ſides of which, notwithſtanding their ſlope, exhibit proofs of antiquity. We arrive at the edifice by two bridges. The pagoda, like all others, is built in the centre of a vaſt court, the circuit of which ſtruck me with aſtoniſhment. The wall is ſo ancient, that it has three times undergone a thorough repair; the difference of the maſon work cannot eſcape the eye of an attentive and experienced obſerver; as a neceſſary conſequence of the injuries of time, it has now fallen into ruins. The two upper parts of the maſonry have nothing remarkable in them but their antique appearance; they are compoſed of brick. That which ſupports them is alſo of brick, but in better condition; and the Malabar ſtyle is diſcernible in two mouldings which time has ſpared: the whole reſts on a foundation of granite of the greateſt beauty, of which the level has not given way a ſingle inch. All the foundation of the weſtern front, as well as that of the ſouthern, is completely preſerved; the architecture is viſibly Greek, for the plinth, the ſwell above it, and the aſtragal, are as correctly diſplayed as if done by an architect of the preſent day; the whole is completely laid out by line, and calculated to engage the attention of a ſpectator. When we compare this monument with the pagodas of Chalambarum and Jagrenaut, both conſtructed in the Malabar taſte, and paſſing for antiquities, it is difficult to account for a piece of Greek architecture thus

appearing in the midſt of a country where no other trace of it is to be found, except in European eſtabliſhments, and there even no work of granite of this kind exiſts. I have ſeen in this country many *chauderies* and other buildings conſtructed of a ſimilar ſtone, but they were all of the Malabar or Indian architecture, without the ſmalleſt Greek veſtige preſenting itſelf. The Moors of Datcharom have the higheſt idea of the antiquity of this pagoda; it exiſted, they ſay, long before they ſettled on this ſpot, and they have ſuffered it to remain for the uſe of the Hindoos living with them in the village. Their tradition informs them of the erection of the two ſuperior pieces of maſonry; but they are ignorant of the date of the third, and have no idea of the age of the foundation on which the whole ſtands.

Whoever was the architect that built this monument, he muſt have taken every poſſible precaution to do it with ſolidity, conſidering that he had to work in the midſt of water; and he ſucceeded, for the building has remained to this day. It is fair to preſume, that it was erected in times anterior to Indian architecture, as it would otherwiſe have been conformable to the manner of the country. At the time of the firſt repair the Malabar architecture was known, for it is done in the Indian ſtyle.

If this was a Greek edifice, as it appears to be, how are we to reconcile the remote period of its foundation with the recent one, when the ſea is ſuppoſed to have quitted theſe ſhores? The country in general is ſo low, that a tempeſt is ſufficient to lay it under water; and inſtances of it are not wanting. In the year 1789 all the country of Coringui and the neighbouring parts were deluged by three waves, which a ſtorm raiſed above the common level: the water reached even as far as Yanaon. The ſea roſe above its ordinary limits, and carried a veſ-

ſel * into the plains within three miles of Coringui. When theſe three waves had ſpent their force, the ſea returned to its bed, and the waters ran off. An event like this proves beyond diſpute the trifling elevation of the country, and conſequently its late exiſtence: how then can it happen, that at Datcharom, in the neighbourhood of Coringui, a monument ſhould be found bearing every mark of the remoteſt antiquity?

If we admit with ſome geographers, that in the early ages of the world the peninſula of India was an iſland, which I am far from denying, it muſt follow, that the plain, extending from the ſea-coaſt to the foot of the Gauts, was ſtill under water at that epoch, as it is much lower than the country which formed the ſtrait between the then iſland and what at the preſent day forms the Mogul, properly ſo called. On this hypotheſis would not the Gauts have been the cradle of the Bramins? It appears to me that the affirmative is probable. Theſe mountains muſt have exiſted from the firſt ages of the world: they are primitive, that is to ſay, granitic: they inconteſtibly form one of the ramifications of the chain which conſtitutes, ſo to ſpeak, the timber-work of the earth: they would ſeem to end at Cape Comorin. But I am not afraid of being taxed with exaggeration by thoſe who have made this part of the globe their ſtudy, when I affirm, that to me they do not appear to terminate till they reach the iſland of St. Paul to the ſouthward of the Mauritius and the Iſle of Bourbon; and the only reaſon why we do not ſee them riſe again between the iſland of St. Paul and the Pole, is, that the ice has prevented us from penetrating ſo far, or that the mountains which continue this chain are not ſufficiently elevated to appear above the ſurface of the ſea. It is

* *The Greyhound*, captain Bourdé Delavillaubert.

this ſame chain which, plunging under the waves, re-appears at intervals, and ſhows the peaks of its mountains, of which the ſummits form the iſles of France, Bourbon, Rodrigues, and the vaſt archipelago, hitherto ſo little explored, which covers the ſea between thoſe iſlands and the Maldives. The Maldives, the Laccadives, and even Ceylon, are alſo a continuation of this chain: of Ceylon, however, I ſpeak from conjecture only, as I have not obſerved it. The mountains of the coaſt which I have viſited are all calcareous; but I conceive that the middle chain of the iſland is granitic. In ſhort, if we admit the principle, now conſidered as indiſputable, of the ſucceſſive retreat of the ocean, we muſt neceſſarily infer, that in the courſe of a conſiderable number of ages the Mauritius and the Iſle of Bourbon will terminate Aſia to the ſouthward.

This opinion is very far from being hypothetical. Theſe two iſlands are already nearly joined to the continent. Their archipelago and that of the Maldives are nothing more than a continued maſs of mountains connected together under the water at no great depth, between which the ſea ſtill preſerves its channels. In a word, to the eye of a philoſopher, this continent is already expoſed to view: the plains alone remain ſubmerged; and even theſe perhaps wait only for the epoch, when the ſlow and gradual retreat of the fluid element ſhall leave them dry, to riſe from the boſom of the ocean; or they may be indebted for their exiſtence to ſome volcanic exploſion. So great a ſpace cannot be entirely without pyrites: the iſle of Bourbon burns already; and it is to be preſumed, that the water, effecting at laſt a paſſage to thoſe contained in the bowels of the earth that ſtill ſupports the yoke of the ocean, ſome exploſion will reſult, and produce either the wreck of the exiſting iſlands or the formation of new countries: we ought rather to incline

to the latter hypotheſis, as the exiſting mountains form together ſuch a maſs of granite, that the exploſion would more eaſily throw up the bottom of the ſea to its ſurface, than ſhake and ſwallow up ſo great a body, the reſiſtance of which is augmented by its adheſion to what is near it, and by the union of all the parts of which it is conſtituted.

But to return to my voyage.

On arriving before Pondicherry the eye is ſhocked with the ruins that preſent themſelves. The church and the capuchin convent, deſtroyed during the ſiege of M. de Bellcombe, have not been repaired; many other houſes on the ſeaſhore, to the eaſtward, in like manner deſtroyed, are a heap of ruins; and the whole exhibits a mournful and ſickening ſpectacle. But when we are landed the ſcene changes. As we enter the place of arms we are ſtruck with its grandeur; the governor's palace adds to its beauty, and gives it a noble appearance; and if every thing correſponded with this beginning, Pondicherry would be the fineſt town in India.

It is divided into two parts, the Black Town and the White Town: the latter ſpreads along the ſea-coaſt, and is again divided into two parts, the north and ſouth. The tower bearing the flag-ſtaff is in the middle, and ſeparates the two quarters.

The Black Town is ſeparated from the White by a ditch running through the whole extent of Pondicherry. It reaches to the ramparts, and contains a population of nearly eighty thouſand ſouls, and a cathedral belonging to a convent of French jeſuits, the biſhop of which belongs to that ſociety. This church, newly built in the modern taſte, is the only one in India that is tolerable.

The Whitetown is very inconſiderable. Its length comprehends the whole front of the place on the ſeaſhore; but its width from the ſhore to the ditch,

which ſeparates it from the Black Town, is not more than three hundred toiſes. This ſpace is filled with handſome houſes, but few of them are more than one ſtory high: it contains a pariſh-church, the duty of which is done by the capuchins of the French miſſion.

The ſtreets, as in every other part of India, are without pavement, and are moſt of them nothing but ſand. As the houſes are all white-waſhed, it is extremely diſagreeable to walk there during the heat of the day, on account of the reverberation. To remedy this inconvenience, it is cuſtomary to be carried; and the pay of ſervants is ſo little, that almoſt every perſon has the means of hiring a palanquin and carriers. So many travellers have written on this ſubject, that I ſhall not enter into particulars: the reader may conſult Sonnerat, Niebuhr, and others. The ſhort details I ſhall give are thoſe of which the authors who have preceded me have not deigned to ſpeak.

A captain or traveller finds, immediately on landing, if he has money, every thing neceſſary for his accommodation in the country, without any other trouble than that of chooſing. This is all compriſed in the perſon of a dobachi. The crowd of theſe people is prodigious: they are followed by a number of boys, and form a rabble which it is difficult to get rid of. The moment you land from the chelingue they beſet you on all ſides. Some ſeize upon your luggage, others preſent you with certificates of faithful ſervices to captains or individuals in private ſituations who have employed them, and each ſeems to claim a right to the poſſeſſion of the new-comer, to the excluſion of the reſt: thoſe who have the articles of luggage make a parade of them, and range themſelves near the ſtranger with an air of ſatisfaction. If he ſeems to diſtinguiſh any one

in particular, a diſpute inſtantly takes place, and an uproar is raiſed, which the beating of the ſea againſt the bar tends to augment. A traveller, landing on the coaſt of India for the firſt time, is at a loſs how to act. At every ſtep he takes, to proceed towards the town, an hundred arms are ſtretched forth with certificates to oblige him to chooſe. In proportion as his embarraſſment increaſes, the Blacks, who perceive he is a novice, become importunate: at length, quite tired out, he makes a choice, and inſtantly the mob diſperſe. The dobachi choſen is generally the firſt domeſtic of a rich man: ſent by his maſter, he immediately falls upon the multitude with his cane, ſeizes, in the moſt brutal manner, on the effects which the traveller has landed, places ſome ſubaltern ſervants to clear the way through the crowd, brings the ſtranger to a palanquin, and takes him off as his prey to any inn he may think proper. The dobachi in chief then comes to pay his reſpects; and, in the courſe of the day, the new comer is furniſhed with a houſe, goods, ſervants of every deſcription, and a well-ſupplied kitchen; in a word, every thing is provided without giving him the trouble even to expreſs a wiſh; for often he is ignorant of the cuſtoms to which it is neceſſary to conform. The dobachi takes poſſeſſion of the money, merchandiſe, and every thing belonging to his maſter's affairs: the former is put into the hands of a caſhier called a *ſeraff*. The profit which the dobachi derives from this money enables him to defray his maſter's expenſes; it is alſo cuſtomary, if you do a great deal of buſineſs, for him to make all payments during your ſtay in the country.

There are ſervants for every purpoſe. The four principal caſts of India are ſubdivided into many ſmall ones; and theſe different ſub-diviſions are governed by prejudices that will not permit them

to engage alike in ignoble occupations. All their ſervices have different ſhades; and the gradation of thoſe who have to perform them is very diſtinct. The loweſt caſts are the ſcavengers and the ſweepers, called *taligarchi*. The ſhoemakers follow next, and are extremely abaſed by opinion; then the domeſtics, placed near the maſter for his perſonal wants, ſuch as waſhing his feet and buckling his ſhoes, the carriers, and thoſe who hold the paraſol; and next the barber, the noſe and ear cleaner, and the nail-cutter. Theſe people refine on every thing capable of producing agreeable ſenſations. I never found any thing more pleaſant than having my ears cleaned by a Black of Pondicherry: they finiſh the operation by introducing a ſmall piece of ſteel, which they cauſe to vibrate by a gentle movement of the fingers, the ſonorous noiſe occaſioned by which, produces a delicious tremor. After this ſervant comes the hair-dreſſer, then the *maſſer*. Maſſing is alſo a ſenſation which theſe people know how to produce.

After living ſome time in the climate of India, we are exhauſted by perſpiration; the great heat occaſions laſſitude, we are ſcarcely able to move about, the humours have no circulation, and the blood becomes thick; we feel heavy, are oppreſſed with an inclination to ſleep, and fall into a ſtate of apathy, which terminates in ſome malady, and often in ulcers. The baths are not always ſufficient to reſtore the benumbed fibres to their wonted tone: but all theſe accidents are prevented by undergoing the operation of maſſing. We accuſtom ourſelves to it by degrees, beginning gently at firſt: but after five or ſix months it is uſed more vigorouſly. The perſon on whom the operation is performed lies on a bed; a ſervant kneads him all over like a piece of ſoft dough, taking care to dwell particularly on the muſcles of the arms, legs, &c.

The uſe of this ceremony is to make the blood and humours circulate freely; it produces an agreeable ſleep; after which we riſe active and nimble, without inconvenience, pain, numbneſs, or headach.

Next to the maſter comes the *valet-de-chambre*, and then the perſon who has the care of the clothes, linen, &c. When a valet-de-chambre gives his maſter a ſhirt, the writer gravely ſets it down in the account, ſhuts the trunk, takes the key of it with great importance, and adds it to a bunch which he proudly carries on one ſhoulder: the larger is the ſize of this bunch of keys, of ſo much the greater importance does the ſervant think himſelf.

After him comes the *hooka-badar*, who prepares the hooka, and preſents it to his maſter when he wiſhes to ſmoke. A deſcription of this inſtrument has been given in the works of almoſt all travellers in this country. The grand merit of an hooka-badar is to aſſiſt his maſter when he ſmokes in his palanquin or on horſe-back; for which purpoſe he muſt carry the bottle and a chafing-diſh, while his maſter holds the end of the ſerpentine tube. In this manner he keeps up with the bearers of the palanquin, or the horſe, without the leaſt inconvenience: the fire, the tobacco, the water, are all carried with ſo much precaution, that a perſon ſmokes as commodiouſly as in an apartment.

After the hooka-badar comes the *pion* or ſoldier. This perſonage is of the Mooriſh caſt, and is ſometimes valiant, often quarrelſome, and always proud of his poſt. He wears a bandoleer or ſhoulder-belt, with a plate of ſilver, on which are engraved the arms or ciphers of the perſon in whoſe ſervice he is. His employment is to execute little commiſſions, and accompany his maſter when he goes out; he is armed either with a ſabre or pike, and runs before

the palanquin, driving away the crowd, and crying inceſſantly, in the Mooriſh tongue, to clear the road. The number of pions is increaſed according to the luxury intended to be diſplayed. A tradeſman has uſually two; while thoſe who in any way belong to government have four or five. A tradeſman, borne rapidly along in his palanquin, preceded by his pions and four carriers in relay, accompanied by his hooka-badar and umbrella-holder, followed by waiters and writers who never quit him, making a great noiſe and upſetting the crowd on their paſſage, has no longer the appearance, in the eyes of a new comer, of a perſon in this ſtation of life, but would be rather taken for ſome rich and powerful nobleman.

The next moſt important perſonage is the porter. This man thinks himſelf inveſted with a great charge: it is true he guards the door with ſo ſcrupulous an attention, that he frequently ſtops the ſervants of the houſe when they are going out with a parcel, unleſs they give him the counterſign to let them paſs.

To theſe muſt be added the cook and his aſſiſtants; the *compradore*, whoſe buſineſs is to purchaſe proviſions; the butler and ſteward, and the perſon who waits at table, which complete the crowd of domeſtics attached to the immediate ſervice of a man moderately rich.

After a hoſt like this one would imagine the liſt muſt be finiſhed: but no; there are beſides, the dobachi in chief, and three or four upper ſervants, as many ſubaltern writers, and a multitude of young Indians belonging to him, to learn the trade, and who form together a very conſiderable retinue. The dobachi enters alone into the chamber or cloſet of the maſter, followed by a writer to take orders, make notes, or preſent accounts. As this man has

the management of every thing, an European merchant has only to inſpect his proceedings and make known his wiſhes. This little morning audience over, he is diſmiſſed, and the houſe remains crowded with his ſuite: they take poſſeſſion of every corner, and, ſitting on the ground, are employed in writing, obſerving all the while ſo profound a ſilence, that the maſter, to be heard, has only to clap his hands ſoftly in his apartment, and inſtantly the whole troop is in motion. In paying a morning-viſit, it becomes a ſtudy how to be able to make way in the anti-chamber, or hall, through the midſt of all theſe writers, ſurrounded with their papers, without treading ſome of them under foot. The Indians begin to write on ſilk paper, which they procure from China. In general, it ſucks up a great deal of ink: but they have not yet adopted the cuſtom of making their books of this paper. They commonly write on the fan-palm leaf, uſing for the purpoſe an iron bodkin, which they move with the right hand, and conduct with the thumb-nail of the left, holding the leaf in the hand without reſting it. When they wiſh to make a book, they cut a number of leaves of the ſame length, make holes in them at each end, and file them: to the cords two thin boards, wider and longer than the leaves, are faſtened, and which ſerve to preſerve them. They ſhut the book, and faſten it by drawing the cords tight: there are books of this kind extremely voluminous.

The Moors and Malabars have different characters. The Mooriſh language is derived from the Perſian, of which it has taken the alphabet. This language is much uſed in every part of Aſia, China excepted. The ſoldiers and ſailors all ſpeak it.

The Malabar language is that of the country; it has its particular characters. The ſtudy of it is by no means diſagreeable; and it has literary works

numerous enough to afford any one, who is desirous of instructing himself, sufficient reading.

But again, for every thing relating to the languages, customs, and religion of India, I refer to Sonnerat. It is difficult after this author to say any thing new. All that can be done is to indicate the facts, in order to put the reader in the right road.

I shall not treat of the different casts, that object being so well known as to render it unnecessary; but to those with which we are acquainted, there is a new one to be added, that increases considerably, and perhaps will end one day in over-running all the rest, the Bramins excepted.

This is the cast produced by the alliance of Europeans with the natives of every other cast. The first unions of this kind were formed by the Portuguese at the time of their brilliant conquests. The race has taken their name, and is known by it. This Portuguese filiation has not always continued white; some branches are again become black, while others have so nearly approached the European complexion, as at first sight not to be known; which is the less surprising, as the Indians, with the exception of colour, have nothing in their features to distinguish them from Europeans. I shall take this opportunity to say a few words on the different people I have seen on the globe.

All men are indisputably of one species, as they can all procreate together; but the races are visibly different. I have observed four distinct ones, which subdivide into several branches. The first race is that of Europe and Asia: it appears to be demonstrated that the origin is the same, whatever be the colour which varies it.

This colour becomes deeper in proportion as it approaches the equator, which to me is a proof,

that it is owing to the climate. I will admit the black net-work found by anatomiſts between the ſkin and the epidermis of a negro ; I will even admit, that the ſame particularity is alſo met with in a Black of Aſia, that is, in an Indian of the low caſt ; for it cannot belong to the race of the Bramins, whoſe colour is a pale yellow, a little leſs dark than that of the Mulattoes, and of a freſher hue.

But even allowing, that this net-work is found in an Indian, I ſhould not the leſs be inclined to conclude, that the climate had alone produced it, and that by a higher latitude it would be diſperſed in a few generations, even without intercourſe with the whites. The Blacks, moreover, I mean thoſe that are abſolutely ſo, are not very numerous in Aſia. Few are found except in the peninſula of India, at Pegu, and in the iſlands ; for as ſoon as we reach the latitude of twenty degrees, the ſpecies begins to aſſume a clearer teint. In other reſpects, the features are the ſame as ours. The leading ones are moderately thick lips, protuberant noſe, long eyes, ſoft long hair, and a beard.

This race in Europe takes three very diſtinct ſhades, that of the eaſt, that of the weſt, and the Laplanders. The firſt have preſerved ſomething of the Greek countenance, which is not ſo much altered but it may be recognized. In Aſia, the principal ſhades are thoſe of the Whites, the Bramins and the copper-coloured, the Blacks and the Chineſe. The moſt ſtriking features of the latter are, the noſe leſs protuberant, the eyes ſmall and placed obliquely. All theſe ſub-diviſions are, in my opinion, of one common origin ; the climate alone has imprinted on them the difference by which they are characterized.

The ſecond race is that of Africa. This is perfectly diſtinct, and muſt have had a different ori-

gin. Its principal characters are generally a black complexion without poliſh, the noſe flat and broad, with little projection, round eyes, thick lips, and curling woolly hair and beard. There has been only one ſub-diviſion of this race hitherto diſcovered, which is that of the Hottentots, who are of a colour leſs deep, and who have individuals among them inclining in ſome degree to a copper-colour; but in other reſpects the characteriſtics are the ſame. The curly wool, in particular, appears to be the principal attribute of the African race. A celebrated writer of our own time has aſſerted, that the cradle of the human race was in the flat part of Tartary. I ſhall not conteſt this origin of the Europeans and Aſiatics, for I am perſuaded they have ſprung from a common ſtock; but I cannot ſo readily believe, that Africa owes its population to the ſame ſource. The Iſthmus of Suez has viſibly ſerved as a bed for the ſea, in times when Africa could not have been unpeopled. That great iſland muſt have had a race peculiar to itſelf in ages when navigation was too little known for us to ſuppoſe, that men could have been diſperſed over the globe by means of their ſhips. We will admit, with ſome authors, that the primitive inhabitants were enabled to deſcend from Caucaſus, and ſpread themſelves over the plains in proportion as they were left dry. But we have no reaſon to refuſe a ſimilar means of population to Africa, who might alſo have had her Caucaſus, whence the ſource of the African race derived its birth. We are not ſufficiently acquainted with that part of the world to form ſolid conjectures reſpecting it, but are obliged to confine our obſervations to the race of men that inhabit it. This race is certainly different from ours. The origin cannot poſſibly be the ſame; to prove it ſo, it would be neceſſary that an African family, tranſ-

ported into Europe, ſhould aſſume, without mixing with the race of Europe, European features, that the hair ſhould become ſtraight, &c.; and ſo of a European family tranſported into Africa.

We do not find, however, that the hair of the Creoles of the Cape of Good Hope, whoſe families have lived three or four generations in the country, becomes changed into wool. This wool is ſo ſtrongly impreſſed on the African race, that even when they intermix with Europeans, it is the laſt characteriſtic that diſappears. It clings ſo cloſely to the race, it diſtinguiſhes them ſo perfectly from all others, that even in thirty-four degrees of latitude it loſes nothing of its force; it is ſtill the ſame wool. This peculiarity ſo completely belongs to Africa, that it confines itſelf within her limits, and does not paſs beyond them. The Spaniards, ſeparated by a ſtrait of only one-and-twenty miles, have long ſhining hair. The Arabs too, who border on Africa, who are merely divided by the ſtraits of Babelmandel, have in like manner all long hair. When the marks are ſo diſtinct, how is it poſſible not to acknowledge that the origin is different* ?

* I know that Mr. Bruce ſays, Vol. I. page 172, that the Kennoufs, a people inhabiting the banks of the Nile, beyond the ſecond cataract of Nubia, have hair, not wool; but he did not inquire, whether the colony is indigenous, or whether it came from Aſia. All the country, as we know, is over-run with Arabs; and there is no reaſon for refuſing to believe that the Kennoufs are of Arabian origin; ſo that this fact, which the author's reputation does not permit us to doubt, proves nothing againſt our ſyſtem.

The ſame traveller aſſures us, page 342, that the inhabitants to the ſouthward of Cape Heli, between Yemen and the ſtates of the ſcherif of Mecca, have wool inſtead of hair. This alſo does not ſubvert what I have advanced: to overcome my opinion, individuals with woolly hair muſt be found all over the earth, intermingled with others that have long hair; but while I ſee them confined to a ſmall diſtinct colony, I conſider the circumſtance as a new proof in my favour, and infer, that they have a different origin from the inhabitants of the country in the midſt of whom

The third race is principally found towards Darien, but its individuals are much leſs numerous. Theſe are the Albinos, who are chiefly diſtinguiſhed by the dead whiteneſs of their ſkin, by flax inſtead of hair on their heads, and by little round eyes incapable of ſupporting the light of day.

It would not be eaſy to decide on the origin of theſe miſerable beings, to whom nature has refuſed ſo much. She has endowed them, it is true, with the faculty of thinking and ſpeaking; but the latter quality is ſo imperfect among them, that it rather reſembles a murmur than an articulation: even at a ſhort diſtance the movement of their lips is all that can be perceived: no ſound reaches the ear, unleſs we are near enough to touch them.

As to their faculty of thinking, if we may judge from their indolent mode of life, reſulting perhaps from a ſenſe of their weakneſs, it is by no means profound: indeed, reflecting on ſuch actions of theirs with which we are acquainted, we are forced to admit, that they have no more reaſon than is barely ſufficient to enable them to avoid what is injurious.

This unhappy race, weak and defenceleſs, no longer conſiſts, but of a few ſcattered individuals, eſcaped from wild beaſts and men, by whom they have been hunted. Some of them have arrived

they are encompaſſed. On the coaſt of Arabia we meet with Abyſſinians at every ſtep. Is the ineſtimable author I have mentioned ſure, that the canton of Cape Heli may not have given an aſylum to an emigration from Abyſſinia, either during the wars for the eſtabliſhment of Mahometaniſm, or before that period? His obſervations, though generally admirable, require perhaps ſometimes to be examined cloſely; for it is poſſible he may have relied on a bad compiler, for the care of putting his notes in order. Ought we not, for inſtance, to place in the rank of doubtful obſervations that which leads him to give 24° 45″ north as the latitude of Syenne, which is cloſe to the ſpot where Pliny and Strabo ſay the well was dug directly under the tropic?

among us; and, if we were raſh enough to form a judgment of nature by ſuch ſpecimens, we muſt ſuppoſe, that ſhe had only thrown a few of this race vaguely on the globe, without permitting them to form a colony of their own: at leaſt, the utmoſt endeavours of travellers have never been able to diſcover one. A few of theſe wretched beings, of both ſexes, have been met with on the coaſt, where they appeared to live on fiſh, and have been ſuppoſed, unjuſtly perhaps, to poſſeſs ſcarcely more intellect than the oyſters which they tear from the rocks.

If this race of men was ever numerous, it has almoſt entirely diſappeared; for there now exiſts no more inſtances than is juſt ſufficient to preſerve the remembrance of it: it is, beſides, too little known for it to be determined, whether it has any ſub-diviſions, or even for us to ſay any thing poſitive reſpecting it.

It has been imagined, that the phyſical and moral ſtate of theſe beings was occaſioned by ſickneſs; ſome have even thought, that it was the appearance of the diſorder itſelf: but theſe are merely conjectures; and we ought to conſider them as a diſtinct race, till we have acquired information that may do away all doubt on the ſubject.

The fourth race is that of America. A people, ſpreading under a ſky ſo varied as to comprehend all the zones, muſt be ſuppoſed to have numerous ſub-diviſions; and in reality they extend almoſt to infinity: but, with the exception of a few hordes of ſavages to the northward, they are principally diſtinguiſhed by having no beard.

This mark is as ſtriking and indelible as the wool of the Africans; and it appears to me as inconteſtably to prove, that their origin is different from ours.

The newneſs of this continent does not ſeem to me an undeniable proof, that its inhabitants came

from what is called the old world: the plains alone have the appearance of being recently freed from the waters of the ocean; but there is nothing to induce us to believe, that the mountains ſhould have been ſubmerged when ours were dry. If the Pichincha and the Chimborazo bear evident marks of the reſidence of the ocean on their moſt elevated peaks, our Alps preſent the ſame teſtimonials; and to me it ſeems reaſonable to believe, that the mountains of America were the ſecret reſidence of the firſt individuals of the American race; as Caucaſus, perhaps Atlas, and other mountains, have been the birth-place of the different races which now people Europe and Africa. In a word, the hair and beard are, in my opinion, marks by which Nature has ſeparated the three grand diviſions of the inhabitants of the earth (for the Albinos are ſo few in number, that I can hardly conſider them with the others); the livery which ſhe has ordained them to wear is not to be effaced; it has ſubſiſted from their origin, and will be an eternal monument to atteſt the difference of the ſources whence they have derived their exiſtence.

From the ſyſtem of which I have drawn the outlines, it is not ſurpriſing that the Portugueſe race, by intermarriages, ſhould be ſo perfectly aſſimilated with that of India, as, in the courſe of ſeveral generations, to be no longer diſtinguiſhed.

Among the ladies of Pondicherry, there are few that can boaſt of a white origin without mixture. If the filiation were in all inſtances tranſmitted by the whites, each branch of a family being of the ſame degree of fairneſs, the inconvenience would be ſmall. But it will happen, that of two ſiſters, one will have married a Portugueſe or ſome other White, and the other a Negro; and the ſecond couſins may thus be ſome very white and others

very black. The Whites may arrive at a conſiderable fortune, and the others remain in a ſtate of ſervitude. This happens every day; and, as an example of it, I ſhall mention a perſon in office, a man of eſtimable character, who, having eſpouſed a woman of equal rank, but whoſe father was of the party-coloured tribe, was the firſt to jeſt upon the ſubject; and he did it ſo freely that it was a frequent cauſe of domeſtic quarrel. One of his pleaſantries was, that he was fearful of correcting his ſervants, when they committed a fault, and that he always ſpoke to them civilly, from the idea, that among them might be ſome couſin-german of his wife.

I knew but two families at Pondicherry of perfectly pure blood; the children of the one were two ſons who had married women of the country; the other had daughters only, who cannot perpetuate their name; ſo that in twenty years Pondicherry can boaſt but of a ſingle family whoſe European filiation can be proved without mixture. Theſe alliances are become ſo common, the portion of inhabitants known by the name of the Portugueſe caſt is at preſent ſo conſiderable, and continues to increaſe with ſuch rapidity, that, by aid of the miſſionaries, it will eventually terminate, to all appearance, in over-running the other caſts, with the exception of the Bramins, who are ſcrupulouſly attentive not only to prevent alliances with ſtrangers, but alſo to avoid communication with them; and ſo far do they carry this, as even to break the vaſes, in which, by the laws of hoſpitality, they have given them to drink, when occaſion has demanded it.

Ever remember, they ſay to their children from their infancy, that you are born to command other men. This leſſon is repeated every day, and contributes perhaps as much as any thing elſe to gen-

erate in them the idea they entertain of their ſuperiority over every other caſt.

Be this as it may, the Bramins are in poſſeſſion of eminent employments, great wealth, and unbounded eſteem. They were probably indebted for this aſcendency at firſt to their phyſical powers and their arms, and they preſerved it by their virtues and underſtanding. The conſideration they ſtill enjoy reſts on a ſimilar foundation, the knowledge they poſſeſs. It is certainly from the opinion which is formed of their virtue and ſagacity, that they are placed in the firſt rank; but this is a matter of opinion only, and the firſt revolution in principles may do away the ſupremacy. They have already loſt their phyſical ſuperiority: their caſt, like all the human race, is fallen off from the vigour which the firſt men muſt have poſſeſſed; the conſideration reſulting from arms has gone from them to the Moors, by whom they have been conquered. If any thing can maintain them in their preſent elevated rank, it is their ſecret as to their primitive language, their myſteries, the books of their religion, the knowledge derived from them, and more than all, perhaps, the privilege of being immediately charged with the ceremonies of worſhip, the altars, and the gods.

Theſe altars are contained in ſmall temples, called pagodas. Some of theſe edifices are very conſiderable, and cover a great extent of ground; but is is by means of the adjacent buildings, the towers conſtructed over the gates, and the ſurrounding objects of the court, that the temples have ſo grand an appearance. The pagoda itſelf is a ſmall edifice not capable of containing more than an hundred perſons: it is generally ſituated in the middle of the court: the idol is placed on a little pedeſtal, ornamented with flowers, expoſed to the veneration

of the people. They burn before the image of the god a great quantity of cocoa-oil in a multitude of small lamps; they present it with offerings of fruits, milk, grain, oil, and flowers; at each offering a number of little bells, fastened to a machine of wood in the form of a triangle, are rung; this noise is agreeable both to the god and to the multitude; and whoever by his present has merited the favour of the bells, pays for it a sum of money for the benefit of the Bramins.

On this subject no one has written with more accuracy than Sonnerat; I have traversed the country with his book in my hand, and have verified his accounts. I shall therefore avoid entering deeply into this subject after him, but shall refer those who wish for details on what relates to religion, the images that are adored, and the different emblems by which the different incarnations of Brama and the other divinities are represented, to the work itself.

Wisdom is worshipped under the image of a cow: we find this image in all the pagodas, placed on a large pedestal in the middle of the court; we meet with it also on the highways, where several roads meet, in a small nook cut in one of the extremities. The Indians pay particular devotion to this goddess, whose excrement they hold in great veneration: it has the property of keeping off insects; and those, therefore, who observe the rites by which the animal is adored, wash the interior of their houses with an infusion of cow-dung. They also plaster the walls on the outside with it, so that the Malabar houses in general are agreeable neither to the sight nor the smell.

Of their religious principles I shall mention one only, which is interesting to travellers.

Hospitality is a virtue which their religion particularly recommends; and, on that account, a per-

ſon on a journey is conſidered by them as a ſacred object. There are indeed inſtances of individuals having been murdered for the ſake of plunder: but that is not the fault of the dogma. In every part of the world men are to be found daring enough to deſpiſe all precepts; and though a few robbers here have violated this law of hoſpitality, it is in general ſtrictly obſerved. A traveller is not only received with kindneſs, but his wants on the road are anticipated. Chauderies, which are places nearly ſimilar to caravanſaries, are built, in which he may enter freely, lodge, dreſs his proviſions, if he has any, and depart without paying any thing. The hoſpitality would certainly be greater if the poor traveller could find alſo ſomething to eat; but a gratuitous aſylum, in a country where the chief want is ſhelter from the inclemency of the climate, is at leaſt a conſiderable accommodation.

Theſe chauderies are ſometimes very large; they are attended by a man whoſe buſineſs it is to ſweep and keep them clean. A traveller arrives, and without ceremony takes poſſeſſion of the houſe; for the moment it in a manner belongs to him. Another comes, the firſt makes room for him, and the new-comer, without ſaying a word, fixes himſelf wherever he pleaſes. The ſame rule is obſerved till the chauderie is full. When the heat has ſubſided, they proceed on their way, and gain the next halting-place. In the evening each lies down to ſleep, the Indians without order or diſtinction: if an European be preſent, they have the complaiſance to leave him a little corner to himſelf. Though hoſpitality be a point of religion among them, yet, to avoid the inconvenience it might occaſion, particularly on commercial roads, they erect chauderies in their aldées or villages, and by that means are free from the viſits of travellers, who never think

of addreſſing themſelves to the inhabitants when they can find a public-houſe; it is even poſſible, if they were to do ſo, they would in that caſe not be received. Independently of theſe chauderies in the villages or near them, there are others at regular diſtances on the roads in the country, far from any other habitation. The traveller, parched by an ardent ſun, or aſſailed by a ſtorm in the midſt of an immenſe plain, and deprived of every other reſource, thus finds, through the country he has to paſs, a gratuitous ſhelter from the injuries of the weather and climate. If water ſhould not be abundant in the neighbourhood, they are careful to dig large ponds, in which men and animals may bathe and quench their thirſt.

The eſtabliſhment of theſe chauderies is not only a principle of religion, but is even a mode of atonement for ſins. The rich are all anxious to have them built wherever they ſuppoſe them to be neceſſary. A *concuſſionaire*, or placeman, who has made an ill uſe of his authority, and acquired great riches by illicit means, expects, by building ſuch eſtabliſhments, to obtain forgiveneſs. To do good to travellers is to render himſelf agreeable to the Divinity; and a man like this, loaded with crimes, will die in tranquillity, perſuaded that he ſhall enjoy eternal felicity in the boſom of Brama, if he has erected two or three chauderies. A very conſiderable number of theſe buildings is found in the neighbourhood of great towns, divided into apartments or cells, in which every traveller may be lodged ſeparately; and ſome even have an adjoining houſe, better arranged, for the accommodation of perſons of diſtinction; but in the country they are nothing more in general than paved ſquares, ſurrounded by walls on three ſides, the front remaining open: when the building is large, the front is

ornamented with two or three columns to ſupport the top.

Theſe ſmall chauderies have a ſtrange peculiarity, reſpecting the motive of which I could never obtain the leaſt information. The inſide of all of them, or at leaſt of nearly all, is lined with baſs-reliefs from top to bottom; the walls, roof, column and pavement, are covered with rude pieces of ſculpture, repreſenting the moſt obſcene objects, and forming pictures of the moſt diſguſting lewdneſs. If building ſuch edifices be a precept of their religion, it is difficult to believe that it preſcribes ſo indecent a decoration.

The dogma of Brama is not without diſſentients. Some worſhip Chiven, or the bad principle; but whatever be the ſect they follow, they have only one manner of rendering homage to the Divinity.

The worſhipper proſtrates himſelf, and makes his offering in ſilence; the prieſts receive it; and when he pays generouſly, they apply to his arms and forehead a powder of either a red, white, black, or yellow colour, and ſometimes all four. The manner of applying them varies according to the ſect: thoſe of the ritual of Chiven have three upright ſtreaks in the form of a trident, to others they are applied croſs-ways, without ſhape, and at random, while many have only a patch of this maſtich, ſtuck on with cocoa-oil, with which the ſkin has been previouſly rubbed. Thus, however white may be his robe, and whatever pains he may take to keep himſelf clean, it is impoſſible not to feel diſguſted when we ſee a Malabar newly daubed at his pagoda with this maſtich, which looks as if he had firſt grinded it between his teeth, and had then ſmeared his face all over with it. To give a finiſhing ſtroke to the picture, let us figure to ourſelves a mouth ſtuffed with beet-root, which, every time it opens,

appears as if vomiting blood: such is the sight, truly hideous, I have been describing.

If their private devotion be silent, their solemnities are extremely noisy. Almost every people have introduced singing among their religious ceremonies; some have adopted dancing. The Christians of the primitive church danced on holidays; and the bishops themselves conducted the performance. The Jews danced before the ark; they had danced also before the golden calf. Whether dancing was a peculiarity of their worship, which they brought from Egypt, or whether this petty nation, of so little consequence as to have no customs of her own, borrowed it from her conquerors in the time of her captivity, it is certain, that at very remote periods, dancing was introduced into the religious ceremonies of several people of Asia.

This custom has not been lost in India, but continues to this day. The dancers, which the Portuguese have named *balliaderes*, are kept at the expense of the pagoda for the purpose of dancing at the solemnities: they administer also to the pleasures of the chiefs of the sect, who dispose of them as they please. These women have obtained great reputation by the accounts that have been given of them by travellers; but they appeared to me far beneath what has been said in their praise. Some of them, it must be acknowledged, are tolerably handsome: but their dance is by no means so engaging and voluptuous as has been described; and their manner of ornamenting themselves, which has made so much noise, has nothing captivating in it, except the custom of painting a large black circle round the eyes. However ridiculous this may appear, it has certainly a very good effect on their figure, and gives to their look an incredible vivacity. Their head-dress is an *ourgandi*, commonly of rose-colour,

blue or brown, and frequently embroidered with gold ſprigs. Their clothing is rich, but without taſte: and though they are ſometimes alluringly dreſſed, they are never graceful. Their heads are covered with gold trinkéts; the noſe has a large ring, which they are obliged to lay aſide when they eat; and their ears are frightfully loaded with an incredible number of rings of every deſcription. This laſt decoration is not peculiar, but belongs to them in common with all the Indian women. Their ears are pierced when young with a punch, and a ſpring is placed in the hole, ſerving gradually to enlarge it. The cartilage at length is ſo much dilated, that it is by no means uncommon to ſee a wooden ſpring, in ſhape like the ſpring of a watch, and of the diameter of a crown-piece, in the ears of a female. When they wiſh to be full dreſſed, they take out the ſpring, and put in its place as many trinkets as the aperture will admit. I have ſeen the ear ſo prodigiouſly loaded, that I was aſtoniſhed the cartilage did not break, and am ſtill at a loſs to conceive how it could bear ſo conſiderable a weight.

The balliaderes enjoy a ſort of conſideration and ſome honours among the multitude. As to the precedence they obtain, it is only in the interior of the pagoda, from their office placing them near the idol, before which they dance.

There have been ſome among them, who, notwithſtanding the difficulty of gaining acceſs to them, have ſtrongly excited the paſſions of certain Europeans; and hence has ariſen their reputation for beauty. For myſelf, I heſitate not to place them far beneath the female Bramins, who are of a much whiter colour (for ſome of the balliaderes are completely black), of a better look, more freſh, more plump; in a word, theſe were in my eyes deſirable objects, while the balliaderes never made the leaſt impreſ-

ſion on my ſenſes, even when aided by the illuſion of dancing. By the by, as every thing coming from afar is apt to appear wonderful to the imagination, it may not be amiſs to inform the reader, that though the word dancing is applied alike to the mountebanks of India, and the nymphs of the opera at Paris, they are nevertheleſs very far from reſembling each other, not only as to grace and talent in general, but even as to the particular ſpecies of talent belonging to the profeſſion.

The dance of theſe women is a cadenced movement, executed to the ſound of a drum, which a Black beats with his fingers, and which he accompanies with a ſong, that, to ears of the leaſt delicacy, would ſeem barbarous. The mode of beating time is with a ſmall bell or cymbal, which the dancing-maſter or perſon that conducts this ſpecies of ballet holds in his hand. This bell or cymbal he beats againſt the edge of another of the ſame kind, which produces a briſk vibrating ſound, that animates the dancers, and gives preciſion to their movements. They diſplay, however, no elegant attitudes, perform no particular ſteps, but are full of geſticulation, and the motion of the arms ſeems to occupy their whole care and attention. Sometimes, during the dance, they play with Mooriſh poniards; an exerciſe at which they appeared to be expert. One of them, who was conſidered as eminently dextrous, was ſent for one evening to the houſe of the Malabar chief, to dance in my preſence. Seemingly ſome one had given her a hint; for ſhe took infinite pleaſure in frightening me with her poniards, the points of which ſhe preſented to me ſuddenly, turning quickly round every time ſhe paſſed near me, but ſtopping with great preciſion within a finger's breadth of my breaſt. This movement was directed and timed by a ſtroke of the ſmall cymbal

which the dancing-master struck unawares at my ear, and which never failed to make me start, to the great amusement of the crowd, which this exhibition generally draws together.

The principal festivals on which the balliaderes publicly dance are, the hunting-day of the gods, the festival of the chariot, and that of the elephant. For a detail of these festivals consult Sonnerat. I shall merely observe, that the hunt of the gods is not celebrated at present with so much pomp as it was formerly, while the festival of the chariot has lost as yet nothing of its splendour. We may remark, nevertheless, whatever be the spirit of the revolution which seems to over-run the globe and undermine received opinions, that it appears to act upon the fanaticism of the Indians. Formerly all the chariot festivals were distinguished by the death of some individual who thought, that by getting himself crushed to pieces or lamed by the wheels or sharp instruments with which the chariots are armed, he should render himself worthy of heaven; a a respectable opinion, because it partakes of religion. But now, though they are still equally convinced of the happiness enjoyed in another world by those who devote themselves to this kind of death, the number of victims is notwithstanding considerably diminished; few are to be found who wish to purchase future felicity at so dear a rate; and, if we except the pagoda of Jagernaut, the most celebrated in India, where at most scarcely one bigot perishes in this manner in a year, they are no longer seen throwing themselves down before the chariot in the procession; or, if any one should do so, he takes care to avoid the fatal wheel, and comes off safe and found, or, at the worst, with only a slight injury.

We find however in India as great a number of

faquirs as formerly; theſe people ſtill devote themſelves to miſery; but happineſs in the other world is not their motive, and they would probably be much leſs numerous, if they did not find here a recompence for the puniſhments they impoſe on themſelves, in the extraordinary conſideration they enjoy, and the reſpect which is laviſhed on them. He who devotes himſelf to death, and ſeeks the conſummation of his wiſhes under the wheels of the ſacred chariot, has the full reward of his pain to expect hereafter; during this life he does not receive the leaſt portion of it. This charm is not ſo forcible as that of the faquirs. Faith in Brama alone may make martyrs of the chariot; pride governs the others, and ſupports them in the pains they endure. To enable them to bear the tortures to which they ſubject themſelves, this pride muſt be great, and muſt have an aſtoniſhing empire over the human heart.

Of the inſtances of this kind which ſtruck me, that of keeping the hand conſtantly cloſed was the one that inſpired me with the deepeſt ſentiment of horror and pity for the unhappy being who was the object of it. The faquir who devoted himſelf to this ſpecies of puniſhment, had his hand pierced by his nails, which, continuing to grow notwithſtanding that poſture, had cut through the metacarpus, and came out again between the muſcles by which the fingers are moved. Conceive what muſt be the duration of a pain like this, and the conſtancy of him who endured it.

The prieſts, however, are very great jugglers, and poſſeſs the art of impoſing wonderfully on the people. I ſaw an inſtance of it in the neighbourhood of Pondicherry, at the feſtival of fire. A woman, with an infant at her breaſt paſſed barefoot twice over a red-hot pan of the length of twenty feet,

without the ſmalleſt indication of pain. She walked ſlowly; and what invincibly proves to me the juggling of the prieſts, is, that her feet, which I had the curioſity to examine, bore not the ſlighteſt mark of being burnt. I could obtain no proof that the woman participated in the craft of the prieſt; it is poſſible, that, taking advantage of her confidence, ſimplicity and credulity, he might have applied, without her knowledge, ſome greaſy ſubſtance to her feet, the virtue of which was to prevent the action of the fire: but whether ſhe was privy to it or not, ſome ſuch means muſt certainly have been employed. Among the multitude, however, there was not an individual, my dobachi excepted, who was reputed a man of underſtanding, that was not perſuaded that the power of the Divinity alone had preſerved her from the effects of the fire. I am ignorant whether the chemiſts in Europe have the ſecret of rendering the ſkin fire-proof; but I know that it is not confined to the frontiers of India; for I have found it on the coaſt of Africa, in the fiery ordeals which the Negroes of Congo are made to undergo, when accuſed of a crime they are obliged to expiate. The Gangas conduct this ceremony, and deſtroy or acquit the accuſed according to their pleaſure.

The prieſts are far from being the only jugglers, and I do not even think them the moſt expert. Their tricks, prepared by time, and aided by ſuperſtition, have a great advantage over thoſe of other men, and are more likely to ſucceed. But nothing can ſurpaſs the dexterity of their rivals, from whom our beſt flight-of-hand men might receive leſſons.

In deceptive tricks, ſuch as vomiting fire, pieces of flaming hemp and flax, a conſiderable quantity of thorns, and appearing to draw away the whole of their inteſtines by the mouth, and ſwallow them

again, with other facetious performances of a ſimilar kind, they ſucceed by main force, and carry the art to aſtoniſhing perfection. In theſe feats of ſtrength, there is no deluſion, no ſlight-of-hand, no deception: what we ſee is preciſely what we think we ſee. One of theſe performances is of a nature to contradict all the laws of anatomy, and which no ſurgeon could believe till he had witneſſed it. I have known ſome who were even incredulous after they had ſeen it, and who refuſed to truſt the evidence of their eyes.

An Indian, naked like his fellows, with no muſlin round him, nor any clothing whatever to ſerve as a cloak and facilitate deception, takes a ſword, the edge and point of which are rounded off and blunted, and putting it into his mouth, buries it completely, all but the haft, in his throat and inteſtines.

I have obſerved ſome of theſe men from whom the momentary irritation cauſed by the inſertion of this ſtrange body has forced tears; others to whom it gave an inclination to cough, which, as they were not able to ſatisfy it, obliged them to withdraw the blade inſtantly, to prevent ſuffocation. In fine, when the ſword has entered as far as it can, to the depth of more than two feet, they fix a ſmall petard to the hilt, ſet fire to it, and bear its exploſion; they then draw out the ſword, which is covered with the humidity of the inteſtines.

I know that a fact of ſuch deſcription will be regarded by readers in general as a fable, to which they conceive they ſhould give no credit. At this I ſhall not be ſurpriſed: till I had ſeen it I refuſed myſelf to believe it; but I was under the neceſſity at laſt of yielding to the force of evidence; and the exhibition of it is now ſo common at Pondicherry, that among the travellers who have viſited that town, there is not one, perhaps, who has not witneſſed it.

Independently of these people, there are also rope-dancers, who perform dangerous leaps, which those in Europe could not imitate. But of all their jugglers the most amusing are those who are thought to have the virtue of enchanting serpents, and they have at least the art.

India abounds in reptiles of every description, and particularly in serpents.

Travellers who are not sufficient naturalists to class them, distinguish three principal sorts: First, the minute-serpent, which is a small black sort, with yellow rings, found frequently in pastures. The corrosive matter contained in the vesicles of this animal is so sharp and violent, that it causes almost instant death. The general opinion of old women and the multitude is, that a person may live just as many minutes after being bit as the reptile has rings round its body: and hence the name that is given it, of minute-serpent. It is certain, that the ravages caused by its poison are so sudden that the best alkali applied to the wound, at the very moment of the bite, can scarcely counteract it so effectually as to preserve life, and never prevents the part from being affected with marasm, languor and palsy.

The bezoar-stone is not of sufficient efficacy against the venom of this serpent, and is not even capable of protracting life. It is true, that the greater part of those which are purchased in this country are not genuine, or at least are very bad. The Indians have the talent of fabricating them, so as to resemble perfectly the good ones, and the greatest skill is necessary not to be mistaken. The bezoar-dealers generally bring them to Pondicherry and Madras, and have at the same time large scorpions, by which to try the efficacy of the stone. The best are without contradiction those which are found in

the bladder of the antelope; the dealers say they are all derived from that animal. These men suffer themselves to be stung in the finger by an enormous black scorpion, which they irritate by striking it on the back. The wounded part is then made to bleed by pressing it, and they immediately apply the bezoar, making all kinds of contortions as they do it, to persuade the spectators that they feel a great deal of pain. After a few minutes they pull away the stone, notwithstanding its close adhesion to the wound, which is now stopped from bleeding, has no swelling or appearance of irritation, and is perfectly cured. If the bezoar thus made use of be seized immediately by the intended purchaser, there is no doubt of his obtaining a good one; but it often happens, that, under pretence of washing it, it is dextrously conveyed away, and a factitious calculus without virtue substituted in its stead.

The second description of serpent is that called by the Portuguese *capelle*, from *capella*, a cloak. It is distinguished by a membrane on each side of the head, which are in general not perceived; but whenever the animal is irritated, they rise up and form a kind of head-dress, that gives it a very beautiful appearance. This serpent is very dangerous and extremely irascible; but alkali radically cures its bite.

The third species is the house-serpent, which is not in the smallest degree either dangerous or irascible. It glides into the cradle of infants, without occasioning the least accident. Yet we naturally feel an emotion of horror, when we find them in our dwellings; particularly, as we are not sure at first sight of what kind they may be. As soon, therefore, as one of these reptiles is discovered, care is taken to destroy it; and if it is not to be caught, the enchanter is sent for.

This man arrives loaded with baſkets, in which are ſnakes and ſerpents of every kind. His legs are furniſhed with a deſcription of rings, which dangle at liberty on the ankle. Theſe rings are cut in two breadthwiſe, and the two parts hollowed, ſo that at each motion of the charlatan's foot, the two ſides ſtrike againſt each other and produce a very ſhrill noiſe, reſembling the ſound of a braſs baſon when ſtruck with a hammer. Another inſtrument is alſo employed, called a drone bagpipe, of which the bag is preſſed under the arm. The noiſe of this inſtrument is ſo great, that the ſerpent, ſtunned and overcome by it, is eaſily taken.

The conjuror begins by making the ſerpents in the baſkets dance; but he does not expoſe them till he has played ſome time to ſtupefy them a little: yet in ſpite of this precaution, as ſoon as the baſkets are opened, the capelles in particular ſeem inclined to be angry rather than to dance, and, by provoking them, they riſe up, and aſſume a threatening poſture.

The man keeps near them, and ſtrikes occaſionally with his foot to ſtupefy them quickly. When the right effect is produced, a giddineſs takes place, the eye loſes its luſtre, and the ſerpent, by attempting to balance itſelf, exhibits the appearance of dancing.

The reptile that is to be caught, attracted by the noiſe, is ſure to leave its retreat, and the ſight of its fellow-creatures appears to decide the affair; for it readily joins them, follows their example, and ſoon partakes of their ſupineneſs.

The conjuror then puts a baſket over its head, and ſhutting it up in it carries it off with the reſt, amongſt which it figures in its turn, and equals them in docility. The enchanter aſks no other reward for his trouble than the animal he has thus caught.

In every country, thoſe who live on the credulity of others ſeldom fail to give to their actions an appearance of the marvellous, thereby the more ſurely to impoſe on the multitude. It is with this view that the enchanters of ſerpents perſuade the ſpectators, that a few grains of rice will deſtroy the enchantment which they pretend to operate on the reptile, will expoſe their perſons to the greateſt danger, and render their inſtrument mute. Europeans ſeldom fail to throw a ſmall quantity at them, and they are generally alert in ſeizing the moment when this is done. The inſtant they perceive the rice, they pretend to be no longer able to draw tones from their bagpipes, and they fall into fits. The ſerpents, hearing no noiſe, recover from their delirium, and endeavour to eſcape. Fear inſtantly diſperſes the crowd, the moſt intrepid amongſt which endeavour to bring the conjuror to himſelf; who, when he ſees his reptiles beginning to crawl off, is one of the firſt to recover his ſenſes. When rice is thrown without their knowledge, this farce does not take place; an evident proof that it is all deception and trick.

The Indians uſe no pomatum for the hair, but, believing as we do, that a fat ſubſtance contributes to its preſervation, they ſubſtitute cocoa-oil inſtead of it. The Malabars uſe but little of this oil, but the Portugueſe caſt employ it in profuſion. When the oil is freſh, there is nothing diſagreeable in the ſmell; but as no powder is worn, it ſoon becomes rancid, and acquires a ſtench, to which the people of the country are accuſtomed, but that is extremely diſagreeable to a ſtranger. Ladies of the moſt elegant appearance have often occaſioned me a nauſea, in ſpite of their pretenſions to beauty, and the high opinion they entertained of their charms. Good breeding requires that this diſguſt ſhould be

concealed, but I have often abridged my viſits to eſcape the cruel odour that purſued me in every company. Another cuſtom, no leſs diſagreeable to ſtrangers, and which habit has made abſolutely neceſſary to Indians of all caſts and both ſexes, is that of chewing betel.

Betel is a ſmall ſhrub bearing a leaf ſimilar in ſize and ſhape to that of the mulberry, and nearly of the ſame contexture as an ivy-leaf. Like the latter, it is ſmooth and of a deep green on one ſide. Its ſmell is ſtrong, aromatic, and pungent, and its taſte ſo ſharp and violent that it cannot be borne by itſelf. To render it milder, arec-nut and a little lime are taken with it, which are rolled up in the leaf before they begin to chew it. The betel excites ſuch a prodigious quantity of ſaliva, that the inhabitants of the country are obliged to keep diſhes conſtantly near them to ſpit in; in ſome houſes they are even placed on the table. The lime ſtrips the teeth, deſtroying both them and the gums, while the arec dies the mouth of a colour reſembling blood, and which is frightful to behold. Accordingly, nothing can be more diſguſting than the mouth of theſe Indians. The black teeth, bare to the very roots, corroded and covered by a red tartar, give them an appearance the more ſhocking, as they ſeem every moment to ſpit blood. Arec ſtains alſo of that colour every thing about them, and their handkerchiefs in particular are dreadfully diſagreeable to ſtrangers. It requires a long reſidence in the country to become habituated to this practice.

Mechaniſm and the arts are ſtill in their infancy throughout India. The natives have no machines, no inſtruments out of the common way, nor the leaſt knowledge of hydraulics: they have ſcarcely even the neceſſary utenſils for the works they un-

dertake. Neither their carpenters nor joiners have benches, but work ſitting on the ground, employing their great toe to keep firm whatever they are working at, which they perſevere with great patience in faſhioning. They make little uſe of the axe, as it obliges them to work ſtanding; but they do not fear attacking any thing, however large, with the chiſel, which they can uſe ſitting. The whole of a joiner's tools in this country conſiſts of a miſerable line, a chiſel, a mallet, and a ſaw. With theſe inſtruments alone, aſſiſted by patience, they accompliſh any work of which a pattern is given them.

The goldſmiths are no better furniſhed. You ſend for a workman either in gold or ſilver whenever you have occaſion for one, and he places himſelf in a corner of the court with his implements, conſiſting of a hammer, an anvil, an indifferent file, a portable forge, and a crucible. With theſe he works a whole day to make a ring, and will ſucceed in fabricating other articles that require no great invention. There are ſome, however, that they will not undertake. Our beſt European productions are above their ability; but they make notwithſtanding, in their way, a very conſiderable variety.

Smiths are equally behind hand, and yet find no inconvenience in forging every thing. They place themſelves they care not where, make a ſmall hole in the ground, and kindle a fire in it. To the fire they apply a pair of bellows made of two ſheep-ſkins well ſewed together, terminating in a tube at one end to conduct the air, but open at the other, and nailed to two pieces of wood ſerving as handles. The ſmith, ſeated before his fire, works theſe bellows with his hands, while his feet are employed in holding or turning his iron in the fire: when it is hot, he ceaſes blowing, and his anvil being near, he

forges whatever he wiſhes without riſing. If the piece he would heat be too large for one pair of bellows, he employs two, and could even uſe three without any other inconvenience than having two children to aſſiſt in working them. Thus, a hammer, an anvil, and two ſheep-ſkins, are every thing he ſtands in need of. With theſe he will fabricate every article of iron-work neceſſary in building a houſe.

Their ſculptors have no better implements than their joiners, and there cannot be a greater curioſity than to ſee with what addreſs they faſhion the blocks under foot.

Except for linen cloths, they have no painters. They ſtretch the cloth in their court-yard, and ſit down to work on it; for here, as in every other trade, they are ignorant how to do any thing ſtanding. Their tools conſiſt of a bruſh or two of bamboo-wood, of which the ends are beaten ſoft, and converted into threads of no great fineneſs. With theſe wretched inſtruments dipped in colour, which they keep in a kind of wooden box, they deſign and paint the beautiful Indian goods, which we find it difficult to imitate in Europe. They hold the bruſh between the firſt and ſecond fingers, in the ſame manner as they hold the pen when they write; but they have no great need of patience in this talent, as they deſign with admirable celerity.

Of all their tools or machines, that uſed in weaving approaches the neareſt to ours. In Pondicherry, there are ſome formed exactly on the ſame model; but in the villages they are much more ſimple. In other reſpects, with the exception of the workman's convenience, and the excellence of the different parts, their looms are very much like ours, and produce the ſame effects. Nothing can be more portable than they are: when a family moves

to freſh quarters, or ſets out on a journey, a child will bear the whole machine in its arms, when taken to pieces, and thus carry the fortune of the whole houſe.

The inſtrument uſed by carders of cotton is the only one which ſeemed to me to be ingenious. Cotton is the ſource of their wealth; and it is therefore not ſurpriſing, that they ſhould have beſtowed on a machine that prepares it for ſpinning ſome additional pains. It is large, with a head nearly reſembling the handle of a violin. On this inſtrument a large gut is ſtretched, which they pinch with the cotton, and the vibration, toſſing it in the air, ſeparates and cleans it perfectly.

Their ſpinning-wheels are exactly like the large wheel which our peaſants uſe in ſpinning wool. The fineneſs of the thread depends on the ſkill of the workman.

Their architecture, relatively ſpeaking, is not at all ſuperior to their other arts. Its proportions are conſiderably abbreviated: without having examined this ſubject minutely, it appears to me that they have two orders; one ſhort and heavy, with mouldings ſimilar to the Tuſcan; the other longer, light, and ſlender, terminating in a head like a cabbage, different from that of the Corinthian order, yet ſerving as a ſubſtitute for it, without partaking of its elegance.

The manner in which they build large edifices is rather extraordinary. Their houſes are of brick, and in erecting theſe they proceed in the ordinary way: but when they have pagodas or chauderies to conſtruct, and great weights to lift to a conſiderable height, they act upon a very different plan. As they have neither palankas, maſts, cranes, nor any other other inſtrument for the accumulation of force, they introduce a very ingenious ſubſtitute.

The foundations are laid as usual, and the first row of stones being raised above the surface, they throw up earth against it, and slope it down on the outside. In laying the second row, they roll the stones on by means of this slope, and thus get them to their place without the least inconvenience; then bringing more earth, they increase the slope, and lay every row of stones in the same manner till the whole is complete; so that when the building is finished it is perfectly buried, and is no bad resemblance of a small mountain sloped regularly on all sides. The earth is afterwards carried away, and the building remains entire.

The interior of the houses of the opulent is plastered with a kind of mastic, which they call stucco. This composition exactly resembles marble; and when it is well made, it becomes so hard, and acquires so beautiful a polish, that, if not exposed to the injuries of the air, it will last upwards of twenty years. It is composed of sifted lime, when no plaster can be got, mixed with sugar, oil, and the white of eggs.

Shoe-makers are the best furnished with tools, but they do not sew their leather as we do, but have a small instrument like that used by embroiderers in Europe; the thread is therefore passed double through the sole, and another thread run through the loops, which are drawn tight upon it. This method of sewing takes very little time, and indeed great expedition is used through the whole business. A workman takes measure for a pair of shoes in the morning, kills a goat, takes off its skin, tans it for the leather of which they are to be made, and after dinner brings them home to all appearance handsome and good. This quick mode of tanning must of course be very defective, the process being excessively astringent; but the hide, without except-

ing even the colour, is not unlike our green leather. They take meaſure by ſpanning the foot, and by merely touching it will make a ſhoe fit well; but the materials of which the ſhoe is made are wretched. The principal inconvenience ariſes from the ſkins being ſo recently dreſſed. When the ſhoe is firſt tried on, the leather is humid and flexible, but it ſoon becomes as hard as parchment. I am ſpeaking of ſhoes for ſale. The ſecond inconvenience ariſes from its being ſewed with cotton; for if, by accident, you put your foot into water, the thread gives way, and the ſhoe comes to pieces; and even if you have the good fortune to keep clear of water, and the cotton be good enough to laſt a day or two, the firſt falſe ſtep will burſt the upper-leather. With ſuch ſhoes it is impoſſible to dance long, and accordingly if you attend a ball, and have no European ſhoes, it is neceſſary to have two or three pair that are ſewed with ſilk. To remedy this inconvenience, the inhabitants of Pondicherry have thread from Europe, which is uſed inſtead of cotton, and the ſhoes, if carefully made, will laſt a much longer time.

The principal object of cultivation in India is rice. Very little wheat is grown, and that little is intended for the uſe of Europeans. The Indians, comprehending even the Portugueſe caſt, live almoſt entirely upon rice, ſo that having ſcarcely any corn to grind, they are in no want of mills. It would be eaſy to erect wind-mills, but they are fortunate in being able to do without them, as calms and hurricanes would render them uſeleſs during a great part of the year; and as to water-mills, the country is ſo level, that no ſtreams are to be found of ſufficient force to put the wheels in motion. They reduce their grain to flour, notwithſtanding, by the uſe of hand-mills. The population

is so considerable, the means of industry so scarce, and manual labour of course so cheap, that no inconvenience is felt from the want of machinery. It is true, they can never apply any considerable force; but I have seen them adopt in lieu of it, in their shipping, some very ingenious means, and as little complicated as that which I before mentioned in building their houses.

They use a kind of mill to extract oil from cocoa, which, though very imperfect, yields them the same advantages as a better. Several Europeans would have furnished them with models. Mr. Beggle even constructed a large mill at Madras, that was worked by oxen. It consisted of several wheels, gained prodigiously in point of expedition over the mills of the country, and answered in every respect much better. The Blacks examined and admired it, but persisted in the use of their own, for reasons which appeared to me judicious. To erect such a mill a great number of materials were necessary, and a considerable expense would be incurred. An Indian could not afford this, and the machine required besides too many oxen and hands to work it. The rich, in whose power it was to speculate in this way, considered it as beneath them, and were unwilling to turn their views further than the cloth-trade and stock-jobbing. A person of the lower class, who devotes himself to this sort of work, has but two oxen, and frequently only one. His mill consists of a large vase, in which a pivot, fixed to a beam and worked by his oxen, presses the cocoa, and extracts the oil. This machine is erected in the open air, and requires neither house nor servants. Himself alone, between his two beasts, regulates their pace, and works just as much as suffices for his subsistence. The extraction of cocoa-oil is the only process that requires a mill.

The Indians have neither barn nor threſhing-floor for their rice. A man, ſquat on his heels, takes a handful of the ſtraw in his left hand, places it on a block of wood that is before him, and beats it with a kind of mallet which he holds in the other hand. However great the quantity they have to threſh, this is the only method they employ, increaſing the number of hands in proportion to the work. When the grain is cleared from its outward covering, and they wiſh to cook it, they throw a portion into a large mortar, made of the trunk of a tree, hollowed in the ſhape of a reverſed cone, and which will hold about twenty pounds. In this veſſel they ſtir and pound it with a large ſtick for ſeveral hours. As this muſt be done ſtanding, it fatigues them greatly. The rice by the friction is ſo well cleared as to be ready to winnow and waſh for uſe.

Their land is cultivated by the plough. That which has a ſpring of water near it is appropriated to the growth of rice, that it may be laid under water at pleaſure. The fields are divided into ſmall compartments, ſimilar to a ſalt-pit in Europe. The banks are raiſed about a foot above the ſurface to retain the water upon the land. It is well known that humidity, combined with heat, produces vegetation, and it appears that rice, to make it thrive well, requires a great deal of water. I am aware that there is a kind of mountain-rice: but it is probable, that to the acceleration of the growth of this kind of rice, water is not eſſentially neceſſary; and it is thought beſides to be unwholeſome, and to occaſion dyſenteries. The low-land rice, to grow faſt, ought to be conſtantly covered with ſix inches of water. The land is never drained till the grain is nearly ripe. In watering it, the genius of the Indians is particularly manifeſted. Having no hydraulic machines, or the means of applying great mechanical force,

they employ an inſtrument which they call a *picote*, or at leſt which Europeans have ſo named for them.

The ſoil in the plains of the peninſula of India is not yet entirely drained, its ſurface alone being free from the element which formerly overwhelmed it. This ſoil does not reſt on a ſolid foundation, and if dug to any depth, the water, which has not been able to run off in the few ages that have elapſed ſince its retreat from the ſurface, is inſtantly found. From its filtering through the earth, aſſiſted by the ſupply it receives from the rain and torrents that pour from the mountains in the rainy ſeaſons, the ſaline and bituminous qualities it contained are in a great meaſure loſt, and it is become in many places drinkable, while in others it is brackiſh. The cultivators, therefore, have only to dig in a corner of a field, to have a well fit for watering it. Near this well they ſet up a pole about fifteen or eighteen feet high, which ſerves as a reſting-point to a ſtrong lever, a fourth part longer than the pole, placed on an axis ſhorter than the pole by about three-fourths. The large end, by which it is moved up and down, is loaded with a ſufficient weight to anſwer that purpoſe. To the ſmall end they hang a pole equal in length to the depth of the well, and they faſten to it a kettle, that will hold about a half a barrel of water, more or leſs. A Black at the brink of the well ſinks this kind of bucket, and when it is filled another Black mounts upon the lever, walks towards the heavy end, and his weight, added to that already affixed to it, raiſes the water to the edge of the well, where the Black, ſtationed for the purpoſe, empties it into the canal deſtined to receive it, and it is thus conveyed into the different compartments of the field.

This work they perform with great agility every morning and evening to the tune of a ſong calculated to charm its irkſomeneſs and fatigue. A pi-

cote, when the Blacks exert themſelves well, will draw up five barrels in a minute; there are few machines that would draw as much, at ſo little expenſe and with no more hands.

The Indians are in general ſober and lazy; little ſuffices for their wants, and that little obtained no motive will induce them to work for more. When a perſon of the lower claſs therefore has earned a couple of rupees, he can purchaſe a ſack of rice and while this laſts he would remain in idleneſs; but the tax-gatherers take good care to leave him ſcarcely any means of indulging his natural propenſity.

Their exactions ſurpaſs any thing that can be ſaid of them. The wretched inhabitants can with difficulty ſcrape together three or four rupees without its coming to the knowledge of theſe men, by whom they are inſtantly extorted.

The Indians cultivate alſo cotton and indigo: the former is the ſmall cotton of the Antilles, which they cultivate and gather as in other places; but their manner of macerating and precipitating indigo is different from that of any other country. We ſee none of thoſe large eſtabliſhments which are to be met with in our iſlands; nor have they any tubs to beat and macerate a great number of herbs at a time. A workman who is in want of a ſmall quantity of indigo, macerates and beats it in a pot. This proceſs is ſo ſlow as to require all his patience, and would not anſwer for a manufactory of any extent. They frequently leave it to precipitate of itſelf; and as, if the water be not ſufficiently ſtirred to detach the particles of indigo, it becomes difficult to precipitate, they accelerate it with lime. This practice is common in Cayenne, whence it has paſſed to the Iſle of France.

To the cultures before mentioned the Indians add that of cocoa-trees. I have obſerved in another

part of this work, that this tree is the moſt valuable preſent which man has received from the hands of nature. I ſhall not enter here into an explanation of the numerous advantages derived from it, or to what uſes the fruit, hair, leaves, and wood, are applied : I ſhall merely obſerve, that theſe trees never fail to make the fortune of thoſe who poſſeſs any quantity of them in the neighbourhood of the towns of India. A perſon having a ſmall garden containing three hundred cocoa-plants, which require no great ſpace on account of the ſmall diſtance at which they are planted from each other, will derive from it a ſufficient income for his ſupport without any other reſource. Of theſe plants a hundred will in this caſe be appropriated to the production of *calou* or palm-wine, while the reſt bear fruit, from which they extract oil, and afterwards ſell the hair for the uſe of the ſhipping. Such an eſtate at Pondicherry would be worth a thouſand rupees a year : an enormous ſum for an Indian. Some idea may be formed of the price of living in that town by what is charged at inns and boarding-houſes. In the latter, for thirty rupees a month, you live luxuriouſly : and the terms have been conſiderably raiſed to make it amount to that price, for before the war they were much lower. It is eaſy to conceive, that a private family has many advantages over ſuch houſes.

Their calou, or palm-wine, is extracted in the ſame way as on the coaſt of Africa, the liquor being drawn from an inciſion made in one of the principal branches ; but their method of climbing the tree is very different. The Black employed in this work puts his feet into a rope-ring about ſix inches long, which keeps them from ſeparating, and enables him to find ſure footing on the rough trunk of the tree, on which he climbs, by claſping

it with his arms and riſing about ſix inches at a ſtretch.

The common fruits of India are the banana, piſang, ſweet and bitter orange, citron, ſhaddock, ananas, mango, particularly a ſpecies of extraordinary delicacy growing at Velour, cinnamon apples, otherwiſe called atte, jam roſa, letchi, mangoſteen and ſarangoſteen; and at Madras the bread-fruit begins to appear. Theſe are all too well known for any of them to require a deſcription.

European vegetables ſucceed there tolerably well. Of thoſe which are natural to the climate, the principal are brette and ignam. Brette reſembles ſpinage, and is cooked in the ſame way: it is very bitter, and requires ſeaſoning. The Indians eſteem it highly in a diſh called cari. Ignam is a farinaceous root of a high flavour, and is eaten like bread.

I ſhall ſay nothing of the ornithology of India, Sonnerat having perfectly exhauſted the ſubject; but I ſhall venture to affirm, as to quadrupeds, that the elephant is not yet thoroughly known in Europe. With all the reſpect I entertain for Buffon, I cannot aſcribe it to modeſty that this animal does not multiply in captivity. It is in this ſtate by no means diſinclined to love, but ſeeks the female, though not in ſeaſon, and greatly careſſes her. It is ſeldom indeed that this animal propagates in confinement, but there are certainly inſtances of it. I ſaw myſelf a young one at Bengal born ſo lately that it was neceſſary to put boiled rice into its mouth, as, unleſs fed in this manner, it was incapable of eating. Though what I have advanced upon this ſubject may be at variance with the obſervations that have been made in Europe, where the male and female elephant have been kept together, I ought not to be haſtily condemned; for the manners of an animal, ſhut up with its mate in a

cage, are certainly different from thoſe which it would aſſume in its own country, where it enjoys, in the extenſive parks in which it is kept among a number of its fellows, ſuch liberty, that it ſeems ſcarcely to have any ſenſe of its confinement.

The elephant is not ſo heavy in its motions as many have ſuppoſed, and is capable of acquiring by exerciſe conſiderable agility: I have ſeen it ſkip and leap with eaſe and lightneſs. All that has been ſaid of its ſagacity appears to me to be perfectly true: I ſhall not enumerate the inſtances, already well known, that have been cited in proof of it.

The uſe of this animal is become very common in India. Though it bears a high price, and its maintenance is expenſive, there are few perſons of any wealth who have not ſeveral. They are employed in carrying burdens, for taking the air, for hunting and for war. Thoſe employed in war are extremely courageous, and often diſplay more bravery than many men. Thoſe trained to the chaſe are uſed only againſt tigers.—I ſhall reſume this ſubject when I come to the article of Bengal.

Among the diſorders which greatly prevail here, of a depurative nature, and which, with proper treatment, would produce ſalutary effects, is the itch; but it is attended with one diſagreeable circumſtance, that of making itſelf apparent. The inhabitants have a common ſaying, "that love and the itch cannot be concealed;" and they prefer to this complaint the gonorrhœa, which beſides, by ſerving them as a ſort of iſſue perpetually open, is of material benefit to their health. For this latter complaint the root called *curanelli* proves efficacious in the moſt obſtinate caſes.

Pondicherry, at the time of my being there, contained only from four hundred and fifty to five hundred Europeans at moſt. As it was not likely that

ſo inconſiderable a population could produce much diverſity, or at leaſt much contrariety, of intereſts, it might have been hoped, that this colony would eſcape the effects of the commotions which were overthrowing the governments of Europe. It was viſited, however, by the revolutionary mania, which diſplayed all the ſymptoms of extravagance that characterized the Jacobins of France, and it is only to be aſcribed to the firmneſs of the chevalier De-Freſne, the governor, that the exploſion did not prove fatal to half the inhabitants. The detachment of which the garriſon was compoſed was ſtill retained in the ſtricteſt diſcipline; and the indefatigable zeal of this officer would probably have averted all the troubles by which the colony has been ſince agitated, had there not been ſent from France, for the purpoſe of ſtrengthening the place, a battalion of infantry, which was ſoon followed by commiſſaries. Notwithſtanding the pacific endeavours of one of theſe, the commiſſary of the marine, he was unable to prevent the eſtabliſhment of revolutionary forms in the garriſon, which at laſt obliged the governor to retire; and his departure conſigned the place to the fate which afterwards befel it.

By the celebrated peace which lord Cornwallis had ſome time before concluded with Tippoo, the Engliſh company obtained half of that prince's territory. Tranquil in the midſt of its poſſeſſions, it now ſaw its rivals enfeebling themſelves, and enjoyed, without the proſpect of danger, the fruit of its conqueſts.

Its real ſituation was nevertheleſs on the mouth of a volcano, the exploſion of which depended upon the conduct of its enemies. The treaty that was ultimately to overthrow its powers was even projected and arranged; but ſubſequent events did not permit it to be carried into execution, and fate

ſeemed reſolved to perpetuate the triumph of the Engliſh.

The intelligence of the French revolution had reached the court of Tippoo, who judged, that the eſtabliſhment of a new order of things in France might produce a change of ſentiment in his favour, and reanimate the allies who had abandoned him. Upon this preſumption he founded thoſe reſolutions, which have ſince, in their conſequences, involved his total ruin.

In one of his military movements, prior to the period when lord Cornwallis marched with an army from Bengal for the purpoſe of giving him battle, Tippoo advanced towards Pondicherry, and encamped upon the neighbouring hill. The rules of policy not permitting the French governor to violate his neutrality by admitting him into the town, Tippoo requeſted, that Mr. L—, the intendant of the place, might be ſent to him. This officer, who was commiſſary of marine, had by a long application to the Mooriſh language, acquired ſo intimate a knowledge of it, that he could underſtand the ſultan without an interpreter. At this interview Tippoo explained his intentions to him with confidence; and it was in conſequence of the plan which was at this time formed, that Mr. L— embarked for France two months afterwards, in the Thetis frigate, to ſolicit from the government a cloſer alliance with Tippoo, and ſuch aid as might enable him to make an effectual reſiſtance to the arms of the Engliſh company.

Elated with the importance of his miſſion, and ambitious of returning to the ſultan in the character of plenipotentiary, the commiſſary could ſee no obſtacle to the execution of the project, and perſuaded himſelf of the certainty of its ſucceſs.

He had little difficulty in inſpiring an unfortu-

nate and unaſſiſted prince with all the hope which he himſelf entertained. It was from this fatal confidence that Tippoo conſented to the ſacrifices which he made by the peace with lord Cornwallis, being ſure, as he thought, when his expected treaty with France ſhould be ratified, of recovering what he ceded. That country however, which was at this time too much occupied with its more immediate and preſſing concerns, to afford any ſhare of its conſideration to thoſe of India, deferred for the preſent the alliance; and it was not till the ſucceſs of its arms againſt its external enemies allowed it to turn its attention to the intereſts of the ſultan, that the directory, having fallen upon the ſketch of the treaty projected in the camp before Pondicherry, gave him thoſe aſſurances which led this ill-fated nabob to point at laſt the cannon that was to ſhatter his throne to atoms.

Had the ſtate of Europe, inſtead of preventing the cloſe alliance which Tippoo ſolicited, allowed France to ſend a body of troops to Pondicherry, the fall of that prince would probably not have taken place; and the French would ſtill have poſſeſſed an ally, and have kept a footing in India, by which, in times of greater tranquillity, to re-eſtabliſh their commerce. The death therefore of Tippoo, and the expulſion of his family from the throne which his father had acquired, are to be added to the long liſt of calamities, which it has fallen to the lot of France to experience.

The abolition of the monarchy in France having involved the new government in a war with England, all the French ſettlements in India fell into the hands of the latter nation. Pondicherry was the only place that made any reſiſtance: but colonel Braithwaite obliged it to ſurrender, though not till the trenches had been open before it thirteen days.

The garrison consisted chiefly of a battalion of European troops, called the battalion of India, which was composed of about two hundred men, the remnant of the troops which had been left at the evacuation of the place; two hundred who had arrived since in the vessel the *Bienvenue*, and who might probably be reduced to a hundred and fifty; and four hundred recruits from L'Orient, in the ship, the Chancellor of Brabant, which discharged upon the shore of India, with these new soldiers, every principle of disorder and insubordination. The rest of the garrison consisted of a battalion of Sepoys, of about the same number; such of the inhabitants who could bear arms, amounting at most to two hundred, and equipped as cavalry; and a detachment of artillery, of about sixty men, including the Caffres who were attached to it. Thus the whole force of the besieged did not exceed sixteen hundred and sixty men, of whom half were native troops; yet with no other fortification than a ditch and banks of crumbling earth, the garrison held out for thirteen days, and repulsed two assaults of an army provided with every requisite to ensure success.

Though Pondicherry was the only place that defended itself (and it was the only one that had the means), Yanaon would at least show a desire of doing the same. M. Sonnerat, the estimable author of the work on the religions of India, commanded in this place for the king. The troubles of the revolution had not spared even this obscure spot of ground; and six commercial houses, which composed the whole European population of the village, were seen with astonishment neglecting their private affairs, to attend to disputes, and the business of deposing the commandant. M. Sonnerat however recovered his authority, and the governor of Pondicherry having thought proper to send him

a reinforcement of ſix ſoldiers of colour, he purchaſed two marine guns, by the help of which he reſolved to oppoſe any hoſtile attack. Deſirous of entwining a branch of the laurel with the wreath which he had already merited by his excellent ſcientific obſervations as a naturaliſt, he made preparations for defending himſelf with this ſmall force. Though the idea of ſuch an attempt was ludicrous, it deceived the Engliſh commander in that part of India, Yeates, who granted him a capitulation. Accordingly M. Sonnerat did not ſurrender this inſignificant village without obtaining the honours of war, and the merchants ſettled there were indebted to him for conditions, which enſured to them their property and their trade.

Thus fell this fair ſtructure, which, reared upon the foundations laid by Dupleix and Labourdonnaye, appeared at firſt to afford the proſpect of aſpiring to the clouds. Alas, it had ſcarcely riſen from the earth, when this cataſtrophe laid it low, perhaps for ever!

Not ſatisfied with the total expulſion of the French from the continent of India, the Engliſh company thought its taſk unfiniſhed till it ſhould alſo make itſelf maſter of the Iſles of France and Bourbon, the only poſſeſſions of its rivals to the eaſt of the Cape of Good Hope, but which might be a ſource of perpetual annoyance and alarm.

For this enterpriſe a force of ten thouſand men was allotted, who were on the point of embarking when war was ſuddenly declared between the nizam of Golconda and the ſtates of the Mahrattas. Tippoo, ſeeing his frontiers thus expoſed to the effects of theſe hoſtilities, took up arms as a meaſure of caution; and the Engliſh government not thinking it prudent to employ ſo great a force in a foreign expedition, when its neighbours at home were

in this poſture, the troops received counter orders, and the undertaking was for the preſent abandoned.

A fault committed by the government of Madras at this time, has ſince put theſe iſlands in ſecurity againſt any future attempt. Towards the cloſe of his reign, Louis XVI. had turned his thoughts to the affairs of India; and the daily changes in the miniſtry having at laſt brought into office ſome individual who fixed his attention on the means of preſerving Pondicherry, and re-eſtabliſhing it as a military poſt, the king ordered lieutenant-colonel de Feline, an officer of talents, to be ſent out, for the purpoſe of preparing a ſyſtem of defence, and of acquiring a knowledge of the country in which he would have himſelf to carry on a war. This officer, however, being provided neither with men nor money, could effect nothing, and was taken with the place which he was ſent to defend. Being a priſoner, he requeſted his liberty, on condition of not ſerving again during the war, and it was granted him. This was a flagrant error on the part of the Engliſh; and they added to it, that of ſuffering him to proceed to the Iſle of France. There his reputation had preceded him, and on his arrival, an Engliſh officer of equal rank, who happened to be a priſoner, was immediately releaſed. This exchange freeing him from his parole, he was charged to put the colony into a ſtate of defence; and he ſucceeded ſo well in this object, that the Engliſh company have not thought proper to riſk againſt it any attempt.

Thus was preſerved to the French an important ſettlement, that may ſerve, at ſome future period, as a point on which to aſſemble their forces, with the view of recovering their former poſſeſſions in India; an undertaking, however, of great difficul-

ty, if at all poſſible, in the preſent ſtate of their affairs, with no allies, nor a ſingle port to ſupport them on their landing. The Engliſh company is a huge coloſſus, rendered by its ſize and weight not eaſy to be ſhaken ; but this vaſt ſtructure is raiſed upon ruins, and whoever builds upon ſuch foundations ſhould count that his fabric will eventually fall. Still, in the relative ſituation of the two nations, it may be expected, at leaſt for ſome time, to triumph over all the efforts of France. Formidable by its forces, with no enemies and no rivals, poſſeſſing the ſovereignty of all India, enriched by an immenſe commerce, but incloſing in its very boſom a radical defect, in a foreign population, this company will continue to advance, till, enfeebled by its ſplendour, and too unwieldy for its baſis, it will be no longer able to ſupport its proſperity, and will ſink under its own weight. It will be the wiſdom of France to content herſelf with ſowing the ſeeds of diviſion and independence among the tributary ſtates of India, without attempting to uſe open force in the deſtruction of this empire. This is perhaps the only method by which ſhe can ſucceed in reſcuing this part of the world from the dominion of her rival. She will reap indeed no immediate benefit from the change; but it is a maxim in politics, that every loſs we occaſion our enemy is ſo much gain to ourſelves.

I have interrupted the narrative of my voyage, that I might place before the reader at once a regular view of the cauſes which produced the fall of the French power in India. I return to my original ſubject.

I had promiſed an account of the French poſſeſſions on the coaſts of the peninſula. I have mentioned Mahé, Karikal, and Pondicherry ; the remainder are the factories of Mazulipatam, and Yanaon.

The former of these is a considerable town, in which the English company have a council under the presidency of Madras, the authority of which extends northward to the frontiers of the Four Sircars. The French government had retained, for the purposes of commerce, a house, on which it was allowed the empty privilege of displaying its flag; but even this right was soon disputed, and finally abolished. Mazulipatam contains some manufactories of handkerchiefs which were formerly of importance, till those of Palliacata were removed to Madras, and established within the walls of that metropolis. They are, however, still in request for the excellence of their colouring. The neighbouring villages also, particularly Narpily, produce some which are held in estimation. The French participated in this branch of trade, by means of the commercial residence mentioned above; and the presence of an agent prevented a part of those obstacles and vexations to be expected by foreigners residing among rivals who are jealous of them.

Further northward, Yanaon, a small settlement within the limits of the English territory, was the centre, as I before observed, of the French commerce on the coast of India. This was the last remnant of the acquisitions of the marquis de Bussy: this illustrious adventurer having in his youth undertaken on his own account the conquest of the empire of the Four Sircars, provinces of the kingdom of Golconda, did homage for it to the crown of France. This country, undergoing the fate of the rest of the French settlements, passed into the hands of the English, who from the ramparts of Visigapatam had command of it, and reduced to inactivity the Dutch colony of Biblipatam, which lies contiguous to it. Yanaon and its territory, situated near the southern extremity of these prov-

inces, was all that France could ſave at the peace; and even here the conquerors, before they left it, deſtroyed every thing that might hereafter offend their pride; and, in their uſual ſpirit of vandaliſm, pulled down the houſe which had formerly belonged to the French company, becauſe it excelled in magnificence that of the governor of Ingeram, the adjacent Engliſh ſettlement.

With reſpect to the marquis of Buſſy, he returned to Europe, where he lived forgotten amidſt the honours which had been beſtowed upon him, till the war of 1778, occaſioning the want of a general to command in India, all eyes were ſuddenly turned upon him. The remembrance of the conqueſts of his earlier years was revived, his name alone was deemed to be a tower of ſtrength, and he was eagerly ſent to the ſcene of his former glory, again to diſplay himſelf. But he was now unfortunately of an age ill ſuited to a renewal of ſuch exploits. Arriving in India in the character of generaliſſimo of the French forces, his conduct had no other effect than to paralyſe the exertions of troops, that, under a more active commander, would ſcarcely have waited patiently for the enemy within their entrenchments at Goudelours; and he terminated his career by a peaceable death at Pondicherry, leaving the brilliant achievements of his youth contraſted by the inertneſs of his old age. His countrymen erected a monument to his memory in the church of the Capuchins in that town, which ſtill attracts the veneration of thoſe Indians who witneſſed his early ſucceſs.

Yanaon is advantageouſly ſituated at the confluence of the ſmall river Coringui with the Godwarin. The mouth of the latter is obſtructed by ſandbanks, over which the ſea never flows above ſix or ſeven feet even at the higheſt tides, and therefore

cannot be entered by veſſels drawing a greater depth of water; but by the aſſiſtance of an experienced pilot, a tolerably deep paſſage may be found among the numerous ſmall channels by which the ſand-banks are interſected. This river is deep within the bar, and is navigable to a great diſtance, though little frequented by veſſels. Its borders are pleaſant; and its courſe renders the proſpect very picturesque. The ſtream is broad and rapid; at Yanaon it is ſtronger than that of the Garonne at Bourdeaux. I aſcended it even beyond Cota; and the further I advanced, the wider and deeper I found it. Its interior navigation is trifling, as the Indians are too lazy to proſecute any thing that requires activity.

The Coringui is merely a rivulet formed by the Godwarin, and may be regarded as a mouth of it. It proceeds out of the Godwarin at Yanaon, and empties itſelf into the ſea at a ſmall place called Coringui, at the diſtance of about three leagues. It is augmented in its courſe by the waters of the diſtrict through which it paſſes. This country, which is ſcarcely above the level of the ſea, is interſected by ſo many deep canals as to be wholly impaſſable. In deſcending the Coringui, the land to the left is a vaſt marſh, which, draining itſelf into the river, renders it of ſufficient depth near its mouth to admit veſſels of conſiderable burden. The Engliſh, who are maſters of both banks, have quitted the left, to ſettle upon the right; and a great part of the natives having followed them, the old town conſiſts now of three or four huts only, round a pagoda that ſtill preſerves its ancient reputation. Different treaties have inſured to the inhabitants of Yanaon the free navigation of this river, affording a communication with the road at its mouth. This is a great advantage in the conveyance of merchan-

dize, which muſt otherwiſe have been ſent by the Godwarin, with much danger and loſs of time.

The village of Yanaon, with the territory belonging to it, and a ſmall iſland ſituated to the ſouth, forms a ſpace of about a league and a half ſquare. This ſpace contains a population of ſix thouſand Indians, and is the laſt of the French poſſeſſions on this coaſt. We have now taken a ſurvey of them all: the liſt is not long; and it may readily be ſeen how greatly the power and influence of that nation are reduced in this part of the globe. This is the reſult of a bad ſyſtem, and of obſtinacy in the purſuit of ill-conceived plans. The grand projects of Dupleix would have led to glory and to fortune; but theſe were neglected and deſpiſed, while the ſovereign was led into error by the ignorance and infatuation of thoſe of his court who were intruſted with the management of the affairs of India. So little were the intereſts of France in Aſia an object of attention at Verſailles, that in the framing the treaty of peace of 1783, no perſon was conſulted who was acquainted with our poſſeſſions in that quarter. This is evident from the treaty itſelf, which contains preciſely the ſame condition with regard to India, and nearly in the ſame words, as that of the preceding peace; though the ſuperiority which M. de Suffrein had acquired gave us the power of recovering all our former loſſes. A glaring proof of the ignorance of the authors of this treaty, on the part of France, reſpecting even the geography of the country, on the deſtiny of which they were to decide, is, that they confounded the village of Vilnour with that of Valadour. The one has a very conſiderable, the other a very narrow, territory, and, while intending to retain the greater, they ſtipulated for the leſs. This miſtake, which has deprived us of an extent of land equal

to all that we now retain on the coaſt, is one of the leaſt errors committed on that occaſion. We might have inſiſted upon the whole country to the ſouth of the peninſula, as far as Pondicherry, that is to ſay, all the places which the Engliſh poſſeſs there, and which would have given us the ſame influence over the princes of thoſe ſmall ſtates, as is now exerciſed by them; whereas we ſcarcely acquired in the whole a diſtrict of twelve leagues ſquare. All our meaſures on this ſubject have been ill choſen; while England, on the contrary, taking advantage of our errors, adopting the wiſe and prudent ſyſtem which we abandoned, and oppoſing patience and perſeverance to the petulance of the conductors of our affairs, who were eager to reap the harveſt when the ſeed was ſcarcely ſown, has carried the ſplendour of its Indian colonies to a height unexampled in the hiſtory of the world.

I have thus given a ſummary account of the decline of the French power in the peninſula of India, without concealing the cauſes which led to that event. Unhappily, this is not the laſt reverſe of our fortunes which my pen will have to retrace: I ſhall have occaſion hereafter to take a view of Bengal, where it will be ſeen, that the intereſts of France were managed neither with more ability, nor more ſucceſs.

Having finiſhed my buſineſs at Pondicherry, I left that place for Bengal. As I had broken one cable at the Sechelles, and another at Pondicherry, it was neceſſary to provide myſelf with a new one, to encounter the tides of the Ganges. I could find, however, at this laſt place neither cable, nor the materials for making one, nor workmen. Madras was the neareſt port at which I could furniſh myſelf, and I accordingly determined to take that place in my way, for the purpoſe.

This town is one of the three capitals of the Engliſh in India. The authority of the council eſtabliſhed there extends over all the poſſeſſions of the company on the peninſula, eaſtward of the Gauts; but it is ſubordinate to that of Calcutta, the reſidence of the governor-general.

Madras, properly ſo called, is a very large town, ſurrounded by a ditch, and a fort of wall, falling in ſome places into ruins, but ſufficient to reſiſt a ſurpriſe, or a ſudden attack of cavalry, which is no ſmall advantage; for in war the light cavalry of the natives, called *louti*, are the moſt audacious freebooters in the world, burning and plundering indiſcriminately every place that falls in their way. Madras is thus protected from their attacks; and, in caſe of ſiege, every thing of value is removed into the citadel, called Fort St. George.

This fortreſs, which I examined but very imperfectly, is ſeparated from the town by an eſplanade outſide the glacis: it ſtands on the ſea-ſhore, and preſents ſix fronts towards the land, as well as I can recollect, for my notes do not mention this particular. The fort, having been built at ſeveral times, is of a very irregular conſtruction; not in regard to the polygon, but in the plan of the fronts, which are almoſt all different from each other. That towards the north-eaſt is on the Italian model of Sardi. Its oppoſite, on the ſouth-weſt, is according to the plan of the chevalier De Ville. Some of the baſtions have retired flanks, and others not: the flanks of the northern baſtions are caſemated. This ſide is defended by a ſtrong counter-guard; the ditches are excellent, with a cunette in the middle; the counter-way is good, and is countermined, but I do not know whether the chambers of the mines extend beyond the ſummit of the glacis, nor how far the galleries are carried; and in the

ditches there are neither caponiers nor tenailles. All the works are well-faced with brick, and in complete repair; the covered way is paliſaded, and carefully provided with traverſes; the barriers and paliſadoes are well cloſed and kept in good condition; the depôts of arms are ſpacious; and the citadel of Madras, with a good garriſon, might hold out in Europe againſt an army of 30,000 men, for twenty days after the trenches were opened. As this fortreſs is intended, in caſe of ſiege, for the retreat of all the ſervants of the company, it is neceſſarily filled with houſes; which gives it a dark and unpleaſant appearance. On this account the Engliſh do not reſide in it; even the governor lives in the country, and the reſt of the Engliſh follow his example. They repair in the morning to the fort for the tranſaction of buſineſs, and remain there till three o'clock in the afternoon, when they return, and the place ſeems deſerted. Even the theatre is in the country; ſo that the ground to a conſiderable diſtance round Madras preſents to the view a multitude of gardens, ſpread over an extent ſo great, as to prevent perſons who reſide at the oppoſite extremities from viſiting each other, unleſs on horſeback or in carriages; the palanquins in many inſtances would be inſufficient for the purpoſe. Some of theſe gardens are extremely beautiful, and the houſes are in general elegant.

The poſition of Fort St. George is equally fortunate with that of Pondicherry, and is in like manner ſtrengthened on the ſouth ſide by a river, that waſhes the extremity of the glacis. Over this river is a handſome bridge of bricks. The weſt ſide is protected by an inundation, which the fort can at any time command, by means of a ſluice ſituated at the beginning of the glacis, and defended by the covered way. The northern ſide, as at Pondicherry, is the only ſide open to an attack.

The power of the Engliſh in this country, however, was not always ſupported by ſo formidable a bulwark. The preſent fortreſs indeed is impregnable to the Indians; but the ſight of the old fort will give an idea of the feebleneſs of the firſt eſtabliſhments on the coaſt, and of the ſlender beginnings from which the Engliſh roſe to their preſent greatneſs.

This was a ſquare building, which is now in the middle of the fort, and in point of ſize is not equal even to the preſent depôt of arms. It has been converted into a houſe, in which the different offices of the company are eſtabliſhed. Fort St. George contains a church of the Engliſh perſuaſion: no other religion, indeed is tolerated in the citadel. And elegant ſtructure too has lately been erected, intended for an exchange. The great hall, decorated with portraits of lord Cornwallis and general Meadows, is worthy the attention of travellers. Madras is already numbered in the liſt of places celebrated for the ſumptuouſneſs of their public eſtabliſhments. The poſts for the conveyance of letters, called *tapal*, are well managed; while two newſpapers, a national lottery, a theatre, and a ball-room, raiſe it to a rivalry with thoſe towns, which are the ſcenes of luxury and refinement.

The Black Town is what is properly called Madras, and even the Indians ſtill give it the name of Madras-Patnam. This addition of patnam or patam is applicable only to capital towns, though ſome of very inferior rank ſtill retain it: which is owing to ſuch places having declined from their ancient ſplendour, or to the name having been applied by the Indians at a time when they were accuſtomed to behold nothing ſuperior. The Black Town exhibits only a ſpectacle of filth and dirt;

none of the ſtreets are either paved, or even covered with ſand, but have a ſoil of black earth, which, mixing with the water, forms large collections of ſtinking mud, that engender infection, and allow a free paſſage only to carriages.

The Indians have a vehicle of this kind that is peculiar to themſelves, and which, in my account of their machines, I forgot to mention. Much praiſe indeed is not due for the invention: it exhibits a whimſical and awkward appearance; the wheels are extremely low, and upon the axle-tree are laid two beams, forming a ſmall croſs, to the extremities of which are fixed four upright poſts, ſupporting an extravagantly large head or canopy. This little nook, as it may be called, is entirely open on three of the ſides, and incloſed behind only with a piece of cloth: it will ſcarcely admit two perſons, but one may be tolerably at eaſe, by the help of cuſhions, upon which he is obliged to ſit with his legs bent under him. The carriage is drawn by two oxen abreaſt, and has a number of ſmall bells faſtened to it. It is ſeldom uſed in towns; but the rich and ſuperior claſs of the natives employ it in their journeys to different parts of the country.

The black population of Madras is very conſiderable, exceeding even that of Pondicherry. There are ſeveral pagodas in the town, ſome moſques, an Armenian church, and a Portugueſe one, of which the ſervice is performed by Capuchins. Theſe monks are ſubject to the eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction of the biſhop of St. Thomas, a ſmall village at the diſtance of a league ſouthward of Fort St. George; and both this prelate and the biſhop of Pondicherry, who belongs to the miſſion of the French Jeſuits, are ſuffragans of the biſhop of Goa. The preſent biſhop of St. Thomas is a negro, or at leaſt is de-

ſcended from an Indian family allied to a Portugueſe; he was born in the country, and is of a mulatto colour.

The preference which the metropolitan biſhop of Goa, who is himſelf a Portugueſe, thus excluſively ſhows to the prieſts of every deſcription who are connected with his own countrymen, has had the effect of introducing into the religious rites of that miſſion all the mummery of the Indian idolatry. It is only among the French Jeſuits, and in the parochial church of Pondicherry, that the catholic religion is practiſed with the decorum due to it; the other churches exhibit only a ſpecies of burleſque entertainments. This has perhaps ariſen from an idea of making religious impreſſions upon the Indians through the medium of external objects; but I did not obſerve that the Jeſuits, who have not departed from the ſimplicity and decency obſerved in the European worſhip, are leſs ſucceſsful in making proſelytes, than thoſe who have moſt eagerly given into theſe extravagancies. I happened to be at Madras in paſſion-week, and was diſguſted at ſeeing the majeſtic and awful ſolemnities preſcribed on this occaſion, degraded by ridiculous farces. The tragedy of the death of Jeſus Chriſt, and his deſcent from the croſs, was performed in the church. The latter incident was repreſented by men in the Turkiſh dreſs, who aſcended ladders, and brought down the figure of a corpſe, well executed in point of ſculpture, and of which the joints being moveable, and their bend natural, the effect was ſo ſtrong upon the women who were preſent, that I perceived ſome of them to faint. The Blacks then accompanied the corpſe to the grave, amidſt the noiſe of the ſame inſtruments as the Indians uſe at their pagodas and in their proceſſions; thus reducing the ceremonies of our holy religion to a level with the abſurdities of idolators.

Though the number of Engliſh inhabitants in the preſidency of Madras be great, they are all included in three claſſes; the military, the merchants, and thoſe in civil employments under the company; but the bulk of the population conſiſts of Blacks: there are no European labourers. An individual of the profeſſion of the law, endowed with an active and enterpriſing mind, a diligence not to be diſcouraged, and a perſeverance that might be miſtaken for obſtinacy; a man, in ſhort, formed for the accompliſhment of great undertakings, if properly ſupported—the late Mr. Popham; is the firſt, and hitherto the only perſon, who has attempted the eſtabliſhment of a plantation in this country. Of all the productions of the ſoil, the cultivation of cotton appeared to him beſt ſuited to the natural indolence of the Indians, the labour it exacts requiring more attention than vigour. With theſe views, he formed, with much trouble and expenſe, a conſiderable plantation two leagues to the north of Madras: but with all his arrangements, and the pains he employed to provide a ſupply of water for the ſoil, his eſtabliſhment in the year 1794 had not repaid him even the ſums which he had laid out upon it. Should his example, however, be followed, his ſucceſſors, avoiding his faults, and finding the Blacks a little more habituated to labour, may embark in a ſimilar ſpeculation with leſs expenſe, and make it turn to better account. Whether it aroſe from any defect in the methods purſued by Mr. Popham, or from the nature of the ground he had choſen, I am unable to ſay; but his plants were weak, and the cotton meagre and ſhort. It is not probable, however, that in a project like this he will meet with imitators, thoſe who have money finding it more profitable and leſs troubleſome to employ it in the manufactures of the country. It

would likewiſe be expoſed to a ſerious diſadvantage from a competition with the Blacks, who, obtaining their cotton with infinitely leſs trouble, leaving it to the ſpontaneous operation of nature, and being freed beſides by their habits from ſuperfluous wants, and having made no advances for which they look for return, would always be able to ſell it at an inferior price. There was another defect in the cotton produced in this way, which was not only ſhort in itſelf, but rendered more ſo by cleaning it in the mill. As labour is ſo cheap in this country, it would be much more adviſeable to have the cotton picked by the hand, as it would thus not be broken by the action of the cylinder, and would be conſequently in better condition for ſpinning.

The ſkill of the Indians in the article of ſpinning is well known; the delicate textures with which they furniſh us are a proof of it. Some cotton is ſpun ſo exquiſitely fine, that the force of the air alone is ſufficient to break it; in this caſe it is worked over the ſteam of boiling water, which, by moiſtening the cotton, renders it more ductile, and leſs liable to break, than when it is dry.

Struck with admiration of their dexterity in theſe arts, M. de Suffrein conceived and executed the deſign of removing ſeveral families of them to Malta, to form a colony which might inſtruct the natives of that iſland in the manufactures of India. This enterpriſe, however, did not anſwer the end that was expected: the unhappy ſubjects of it, finding themſelves in a foreign land, among a people with whoſe manners and cuſtoms they were wholly unacquainted, loſt every thought but that of returning to their country, and left in their new ſettlement ſcarcely a veſtige of their tranſitory abode.

At Madras very handſome handkerchiefs of a large checked pattern, excellent in the colouring,

and of a peculiar fineneſs, are fabricated. Manufactories for this article were originally eſtabliſhed by the Dutch, at a ſmall ſettlement which they poſſeſs four leagues further northward, called *Palliacata*. The beauty of theſe handkerchiefs ſoon bringing them into repute, and rendering them objects of general requeſt, the Engliſh erected ſimilar manufactories at Madras; but the former retained their ſuperiority, and were univerſally preferred. Impatient of a rival in any undertaking, the Engliſh ſpared neither pains nor expenſe in this competition, and by dint of their exertions were able at laſt to give to their handkerchiefs a degree of beauty and excellence ſcarcely inferior to thoſe of Palliacata. Not ſatisfied with attaining this point, they reſolved on the deſtruction of the original manufactories; and, in the means they employed for the accompliſhment of their end, the pre-eminence of their commercial genius was manifeſt. With an unanimity, the reſult of a refined policy, and underſtanding the art of incurring a temporary loſs, that would be attended with an indemnification in the ſequel, they ſuddenly lowered the price of their handkerchiefs twenty per cent. This meaſure immediately turned the balance of trade in their favour. The Dutch, ſuppoſing their rivals to make this reduction in conſequence of improvements or economy in the mode of manufacturing the article, or by an eſtabliſhment on a greater ſcale, or perhaps by obtaining on better terms the raw materials, made every effort to do the ſame; but they found a loſs where they ſuppoſed their rivals to have a profit, and were obliged at laſt to abandon the attempt altogether, without ſo much as ſuſpecting the artifice by which they had been duped. The workmen, who were thus thrown out of employ, were immediately engaged by the ſucceſsful party at Madras, who no ſooner found them-

ſelves the ſole maſters of this valuable branch of commerce, than they gradually raiſed the price of the handkerchiefs, ſo as liberally to repay them for the momentary loſs to which they had ſubmitted.

Since this reverſe of fortune, Palliacata, which had acquired a degree of animation, has been reduced to a ſtate of complete inactivity: a ſingle veſſel only goes there once a year for ſome bales of merchandize, which the Dutch company orders to be provided, and which conſtitutes the whole commerce of the diſtrict.

The approaches to Madras are uncommonly magnificent, particularly the great road to the weſt of Fort St. George: the avenues, planted with four rows of trees, majeſtically announce the reſidence of no inferior power. A ſtranger, in entering by this road, conceives the moſt exalted ideas of the place; but they are ſoon changed when he arrives at his inn, if this name may be given to two miſerable huts in the Black Town, and a houſe ſcarcely ſuperior to them in the fort. Theſe inns can furniſh no better accommodation than a vile bed placed upon a couch or a form in a large room, in which the gueſts are obliged to lie indiſcriminately together, after the table is removed on which they have ſupped.

The trade of Madras is ſtill more completely in the hands of the Blacks than that of Pondicherry, the concerns being more extenſive and more lucrative, and the ſales more briſk. The European merchant entirely neglects the minute details, and looks only at the abſtract of the accounts given him by his dobachi: a negligence perfectly ſuited to the manner in which he lives, at a diſtance from the ſpot where his affairs are conducted, which he viſits only once a-day, and that not regularly, to beſtow upon them two or three hours' attention.

The Engliſh company calls itſelf the ally and protector of the nabob of the Carnatic. It has built for him a magnificent palace at a ſhort diſtance from Fort St. George, where it retains him in its power, and dictates to him its will, concealing the gilt fetters in which he is held by the honour with which it inveſts him. The ſemblance of authority is ſtill preſerved to this prince, the laws which the company impoſes upon his ſubjects being promulgated in his name; while his real weakneſs is ſuch as renders it impoſſible to free himſelf from the yoke under which he bends. Like another Montezuma, obliged to kiſs the hand that oppreſſes him, he is merely an inſtrument to ſerve the purpoſe of the company as to the Indians, whom a ſentiment of reſpect for the perſon of their prince retains in their allegiance. The Engliſh are the real monarchs, and reign in the room of the nabob, whom they compenſate for this ſtate of degradation, with the vain exterior of a mock ſovereignty, which he diſplays at Madras in an Engliſh equipage: a luxury new in an Aſiatic prince, and which he has bought at the expenſe of his crown.

The navigation of the Indians is ſtill very defective. That their ſhips are bad is not from the want of excellent materials. The *teak* wood grows in abundance, and is equal to the oak of Europe. Their veſſels are awkward in their form, and are put together with little ſolidity: they are ſcarcely ever caulked; and if they were not coated with a compoſition made for this purpoſe, ſome of them would not be able to float. This ſubſtance is a mixture of lime and fiſh-oil; it adheres ſo cloſely to the planks of the ſhip, that it fills all the crevices, and effectually prevents the water from penetrating. It is called by the Indians *galgat*.

They have another preparation, called *ſarangouſti*,

which they ſpread over the heads of the nails and joints of the timbers. It is made of dry pitch and fiſh-oil, which are beaten together till the mixture aſſumes the conſiſtency of a ſoft paſte; in this ſtate it is applied, and it gives ſuch extraordinary hardneſs as to turn the edge of the beſt tempered inſtruments. Theſe two compoſitions cannot be too ſtrongly recommended to European mariners.

The Indian veſſels are called *parias*. If their hull be defective, the manner of rigging them is not leſs ſo. The maſts are of teak, and are extremely heavy; the ropes are of cocoa-hair, which they call *kaire*; and they have few blocks and ſails. Accordingly, though ſome of the veſſels are ſo large as to amount even to ſix hundred tons, they are only adapted for ſhort voyages, which they accompliſh with the aid of the monſoons. They are ſufficiently numerous to perform the whole carrying buſineſs between the coaſt and Bengal. Their uſual cargo is ſalt and rice. The greater navigation, from coaſt to coaſt, is made by veſſels of European conſtruction.

Excluſively of the maritime trade between the coaſts of India and that to China, the Engliſh merchants engage in ſmuggling adventures to the Moluccas. The profit of this trade is immenſe, and is proportioned to the dangers that are riſked. The ſhips employed in the voyage muſt be able to contend with a Dutch ſloop of eighteen guns, ſtationed as a guard-ſhip off thoſe iſlands. On approaching the coaſt, the inhabitants, who are accuſtomed to this traffic, bring by ſtealth to the veſſels under ſail the ſpices which they have to diſpoſe of, and which they barter at a very low rate. As no ſatisfaction could be obtained for any outrage they might attempt, and no application could be made to the Dutch company for redreſs the crews of the veſ-

fels employed in this trade never treat with the natives without being armed.

The geography of the peninſula experiences ſo many variations, from the ſucceſſive conqueſts and uſurpations which are continually altering the boundaries of the different ſtates, that it cannot be determined with any certainty; a correct account of it now would no longer be ſo a year hence. We may venture, however, to divide the country into provinces; of which the chief are Trevancore, the Deccan, the Carnatic with Arcot, Madura, Tanjore, Myſore, Golconda, Biſnagar, the Four Sircars, and the territory of the Mahrattas. All theſe provinces were formerly dependent governments under the Mogul Empire, each having its nabob, and ſubah. But theſe viceroys, inſpired with preſumption and the aſſurance of impunity from the want of energy in the court of Delhi, conceived the project of rendering themſelves independent. The imbecility of the reigning emperor completed their ſucceſs. Many of them, become ſovereigns, diſdained the title of nabob, and aſſumed that of ſultan or king, which was more flattering to their pride. The governor of Golconda alone has retained his former title of nizam. Hyder Ally at firſt contented himſelf with that of khan; his ſon Tippoo, when he met his deſtruction, had that of ſultan; the heads of the provinces of Trevancore and Tanjore have taken the title of king. The Mogul emperor however ſtill preſerves an ideal dominion over theſe princes, but it conſiſts merely in ſome exterior marks of reſpect which they pay to him, and ſome warrants which they occaſionally ſolicit, to ſanction their ſucceſſive uſurpations, in the ſame manner as the European powers were uſed to apply to the ſee of Rome for bulls, to convey to them an inveſtiture of new poſſeſſions. The emperor, who has

loſt all his real authority, never rejects ſuch opportunities of performing an act of ſovereignty, and always complies with their will.

Among the provinces which thus threw off the yoke of this monarch, the Mahrattas are the only people who, acting upon principles of independence, have abjured the authority of a maſter. They have accordingly eſtabliſhed in the northweſt quarter of the peninſula a formidable republic. They have a numerous cavalry, and their influence in the affairs of India, ſince one of their chiefs, a man of high reputation, filled the poſt of prime miniſter to the emperor, has greatly increaſed. This officer is known by the name of *Sandjah*, which he has rendered famous. His credit at the court of Delhi was the greater, from the extreme incapacity of the emperor. The power of the ſovereign was equalled by that of the miniſter, who, conſtant in his attachment to his country, forwarded its intereſts with his maſter, and brought him to approve of its revolt. The alliance of this republic is of the greateſt importance in the political ſyſtem of India; and the Engliſh accordingly ſpare no efforts or ſacrifices to obtain it. It is to the faithful attachment of the Mahrattas, who joined their forces to thoſe of the company, that lord Cornwallis is indebted for his victories over Tippoo. That prince, believing himſelf ſufficiently powerful to conquer alone, diſdained to aſk for their aſſiſtance; not foreſeeing that ſuch a neglect would give him one more enemy to contend with. The junction of the Mahratta army turned the tide of conqueſt to the ſide of the Engliſh, who had before been repulſed from Seringapatam with loſs, and induced the neceſſity of that diſadvantageous peace, which was the prelude to the total ruin of Tippoo.

After ſtaying ſome days at Madras, I ſailed for Bengal. In the bay of Baſore, I was oppoſed by

miſts and rain, accompanied with a calm, which forced me to anchor in twelve-fathom water. As the coaſt is extremely low, the bottom riſes ſo gradually, that a depth of ten or twelve fathom in the bay is at leaſt twelve leagues from the entrance of the river; between which and the beginning of the flats, it riſes but three fathom. The pilots go no further out than to the depth of ten fathom, as beyond this there is no danger. They were ſtill therefore at a great diſtance from me; and, though I fired repeated ſignals, none of them came. On the ſecond day, the weather having cleared up a little, I bent my ſails, and ſteered to the northward, but not without great anxiety reſpecting the ſhoals, with which the mouth of this river abounds, and with the ſituation of which I was ſo little acquainted, that, long before I was near them, I was every inſtant apprehenſive of ſtriking. I at laſt found the pilots at the beginning of the ſhallows, about half a league from the firſt buoy. Theſe ſhallows are formed by ſand-banks, which project from the mouth of the river to a great diſtance into the ſea. They are the more dangerous, as there is nothing to indicate their approach, and no land in ſight to afford any obſervations for avoiding them: it is neceſſary to ſound carefully every half-minute, and even this would be inſufficient in ſailing with a favourable wind and tide, as the veſſel would be aground before the line could announce the danger. To prevent accidents of this ſort, buoys are placed at regular diſtances in the track of the channels, which the rapid ſtream of the Ganges has formed in theſe banks: the buoys mark the courſe which the pilots ſhould keep. The ſame expedient is adopted in the river Elbe in Germany, the mouth of which preſents nearly the ſame difficulties.

The river, upon the banks of which the European ſettlements in Bengal are ſituated, is not the

Ganges, and is therefore very improperly called by that name; it is the river Hoogly, ſo denominated from the ſmall Indian village which firſt contributed to render it important. It takes its riſe in the Ganges, and may thus be ſtrictly conſidered as an inferior branch of that river, the principal bed of which runs to the eaſtward of the Hoogly, and empties itſelf into the ſea by numerous mouths near Chaligam.

The Hoogly is extremely wide at its entrance: in aſcending it, the land is not ſeen till we have advanced a conſiderable diſtance; the banks of the river firſt appear in ſight at Cadjery. The diſtance between them at the end of the ſhallows is very great: indeed, when we arrive at this point, we are ſtill in the main, and the pilots, who are ſtationed there to take charge of the ſhips that arrive, are provided with veſſels capable of encountering the violence of a tempeſt and a heavy ſwell: they are ſtout brigs, and are calculated for every ſort of manœuvre. The Engliſh company had ſix of theſe ſhips on an old conſtruction, and has added ſix others, built at Bombay. Theſe laſt are ſloops of ſixteen guns, and are capable of ſerving on occaſions as ſhips of war. Thus the Engliſh have twelve pilot-veſſels; and, before the war, the French and Dutch had one each. Theſe veſſels lie at anchor at the outer extremity of the ſhallows. As ſoon as they are perceived, the ſhip that arrives fires a gun, and hangs out a flag at the head of her foretop-gallant-maſt, when one of them gets under way to meet her. If ſhe proves to be only a ſmall veſſel, whoſe draught of water is not ſo conſiderable as to require much ſkill in bringing her in, one of the officers of the pilot-brig takes charge of her, and the ſuperior returns to his ſtation. But if it is a ſhip of ſuch burden as to demand the attention of the

maſter-pilot, he goes on board of her himſelf, his brig ſailing before to point out the track and communicate the ſoundings, which is done in the day-time by flags, and in the night by lights. Theſe precautions are all indiſpenſable, and, though a multitude of accidents are prevented, they are not always ſufficient wholly to guard againſt them. The tides of the Ganges are prodigiouſly rapid. The channels, which the ſtream of this river has formed in the ſand-banks at its mouth, are in ſome places not more than half a league wide. In entering them during the ſouth-weſt monſoon, the force of the wind and tide together will carry a veſſel at the rate of ſix leagues an hour; in this ſtate a ſingle falſe ſtroke of the helm will throw her too much to one ſide, and, by loſing the exact direction of the channel, expoſe her to the greateſt danger, often to the inevitable fate of being wrecked. With the north-eaſt monſoon, on the other hand, the entrance of the river is more tedious and more laborious, but leſs dangerous. As the wind in this caſe is always contrary, it is neceſſary in theſe channels to tack continually; of conſequence, veſſels ſailing acroſs can make but little way, and the tide carries them to their deſtination. In executing this manœuvre little ſkill is required in the pilot; it is merely neceſſary to put about, whenever the lead announces four fathom and a half of water. The depth of ſeven fathom denotes the middle of the channel. By continuing this method from ſide to ſide, the object is finally attained without much riſk.

Our approach to Cadjery, which is on the left bank of the river, may be known by a houſe, ſtanding on an eminence, belonging to the Engliſh company, which keeps a reſident there. From this place is ſeen the point called, from the nature of its ſhore, *Mud-point*, on the oppoſite bank. This point

forms the ſouthern extremity of the woods of Sondry, famous for the enormous ſize of the tigers which are found there, and with which they are filled. This ſpecies is the *royal tiger, or tiger properly ſo called*, of Buffon. Theſe animals are extremely formidable by their ſtrength and activity. Some of them are as large as oxen. Their coat is variegated with ſtripes of reddiſh yellow and black, and is whitiſh under the belly. They are ſo eager and ferocious in purſuit of their prey, that they have been known to throw themſelves into the water, and ſwim to attack boats on the river.

It is cuſtomary in paſſing Cadjery to hire boats with oars to facilitate the principal manœuvres neceſſary in proceeding up the river. Mine being a heavy ſhip, I employed twelve of theſe, which accompanied me as far as the roadſtead oppoſite theſe woods; where, while I was at anchor, they faſtened themſelves to my veſſel behind, as if, in the ſea phraſe, they were in tow. So many boats preſenting a conſiderable reſiſtance to the tide, and acting with violence upon my cable, the pilot ordered them to leave me, and to range themſelves along the ſide of the river, till, the current being abated, he ſhould call them.

When they had repaired to this new poſition, they unfortunately perceived on the ſhore a quantity of dry wood, conſiſting of branches of dead trees. As this is an article of ſale at Calcutta, they landed to cut ſome of it and load their boats. They were at the diſtance of about three hundred yards from the veſſel, and had ſcarcely begun their work when we ſaw them running to the water-ſide with the ſtrongeſt marks of terror. This was not without cauſe, they were purſued by a tiger, of the ſize of a common calf: we ſaw it ruſh out of the wood, and ſeize upon the hindmoſt of theſe men, whom

it carried off in an inſtant, without meeting with the ſlighteſt oppoſition from the unfortunate being himſelf, or his companions. The brother alone of the victim appeared afflicted at the event, and did not again leave his boat; but the reſt immediately returned to their employment on ſhore, perſuaded that the tiger was ſatisfied, and that there was now no danger: this is their general belief.

Notwithſtanding the ſuperiority which theſe creatures poſſeſs over human beings by their ſtrength, ferocity, and the arms with which nature has ſupplied them, a certain inſtinct ſeems to tell them, that men by their intellectual faculties are ſtill more formidable than they: hence they avoid inhabited and cultivated places; or if they ſometimes viſit them, it is only when compelled by hunger. In aſcending the river Hoogly, the village of Coulpy is the laſt ſettlement of the Indians on the right bank, and the tigers ſeldom appear ſo far up. But between this place and the Clive-Iſlands they are ſo numerous, that they are ſometimes ſeen in troops on the banks. Theſe iſlands have been lately brought into a ſtate of improvement for the cultivation of ſugar. The clearing of the ground was attended with the loſs of a great number of Indians, who were deſtroyed by theſe ferocious animals; for, in cutting down the wood with which the face of the country was covered, they were diſturbed in their retreats, and ruſhed upon the labourers. What will appear extraordinary, theſe men never attempted to defend themſelves, though their number ſometimes amounted to five hundred. They believed, that the tiger would be ſatisfied with carrying off one, and would then ceaſe to appear: of conſequence, whenever they perceived one approaching, they ran off in diſorder, every one making the beſt of his way, and truſting to the ſwift-

neſs of his flight, leaving the ſloweſt to be ſeized and carried off; after which they returned to their work. This ſcene was repeated every day without increaſing the courage of the Blacks; and theſe continual ravages would not have been attended with the deſtruction of one of theſe monſters, if they had not at laſt been oppoſed by a few Europeans, who ſuperintended the works, and were well armed. They have now wholly deſerted theſe iſlands, which no longer afford them a retreat, and have ſettled on the continent, and augmented the number of thoſe which infeſt the woods of Sondry.

Continuing to aſcend the river, we arrive at Coulpy, or Port-Diamond, as it is called by the Engliſh, who have provided here *cormors* for their ſhips; theſe are large anchors fixed in the ground, to which their veſſels are faſtened with more ſecurity than by their proper moorings.

The Engliſh government has in this place port-officers, a large bakehouſe, a ſhambles, and hoſpitals for its marine. A market is held here, in which the crews of veſſels may find in abundance every refreſhment which the country produces.

Above this port the bed of the river turns to the left, leaving to the right a very dangerous ſand-bank. At a ſhort diſtance further is the mouth of a large river, improperly called the Old Ganges. It is not till we paſs the confluence of theſe waters, that the borders of the Hoogly begin to be pictureſque. Its immenſe width is here reduced to that of an ordinary large river, and affords the pleaſant proſpect of both banks.

A little higher on the right is Fulta, a Dutch poſſeſſion, accuſtomed formerly, in the proſperous days of that company, to receive ſhips of conſiderable burden; but reduced now to ſo low a ſtate, as to ſee only a ſingle galliot, ſent annually to take in

ſome bales of goods, prepared in the ſettlement of Chinſura. This galliot is ſometimes accompanied by a ſmaller veſſel; and this forms at preſent the whole extent of the Dutch commerce in Bengal.

The eſtabliſhment on ſhore conſiſts of two houſes; of which one is an inn, built partly of bricks, and the other the reſidence of the commandant. This officer is a negro charged by the company with the care of diſplaying their flag on a tree, in the manner of a maſt. This houſe is ſtill leſs ſplendid than the inn, for it is conſtructed entirely of ſtraw. The Indian town however is very conſiderable, and has a bazar, which is well ſupplied. This ſmall ſettlement reſembles, in one point, all the colonies belonging to the Dutch on the Ganges; that of being the ſcene of the moſt unreſtrained debauchery. This perfectly ſuits the diſpoſition of the ſailors, who here recruit the number of unhappy females that go to Port-Diamond to adminiſter to the pleaſure of the Engliſh crews, which are numerous, to contribute to fill their hoſpitals, and often to leave their lovers ſad tokens of remembrance during their life.

My pilot having anchored near this village, I was deſirous of going on ſhore to take a walk; but, as the current was too ſtrong for me to reach the town, I landed in an adjacent meadow. The firſt thing that met my view was a pangolin, which I purſued to the entrance of its retreat, when I made a ſtroke at it with my ſword which broke between two of the ſcales.

I then proceeded towards the village, paſſing through a very thick wood, acroſs which was a path about three feet wide. I was preceded by a pion, and followed by two boys, whom the ſircar of one of my friends, who had expected my arrival, had ſent to meet me. To my ſurpriſe the pion ſudden-

ly made a long leap, and ran off as fast as he could: I advanced to learn the cause, and was equally terrified myself on seeing an enormous serpent, that lay stretched across the path in which I was walking. Its length was so immense, that I could see neither its head nor its tail, which were concealed in the bushes. Its colour was brown; it crept very slowly along, and appeared to be of the size of an eighteen-inch cable; that is to say, as nearly as I could judge, about eighteen inches in circumference. I followed the example of my soldier, and without affecting a courage, which would have been the more ill-timed, as my sword, at best but a sorry weapon in such extremity, was already broken, jumped over this monster, and proceeded with a little more alertness than the usual pace. The two boys behind me, alarmed at seeing a pion fly, and even an European follow him with tolerable quickness, ran back, and did not rejoin me till the next day on board my vessel.

After ascending some leagues higher on the river, we find on the right bank the anchoring ground of Mayapour. This place was formerly to the French, what Fulta was to the Dutch: it was the road where such vessels of the French company stopped, that were unable to proceed to Chandernagore for want of the necessary depth of water. This place also has undergone the same fate as Fulta, in proportion as the affairs of France have declined in this quarter. It is at present even in a worse condition than that village; for it has now no European houses, and no flag; a few huts and a miserable bazar scarcely bear testimony to its former existence. No traces recal the idea of the commerce of this place during the splendour of the French company: a striking example of the vicissitudes of human institutions! Mayapour was a port

of extenſive trade; and veſſels of fifteen hundred tons burden frequented its road in great numbers, diſpenſing abundance and luxury, when Port-Diamond did not as yet exiſt. At preſent, the latter is flouriſhing, while the former is deſerted, and offers nothing but its name to remind the traveller of its ancient opulence: the common deſtiny of all the French eſtabliſhments, which a conſtant ſucceſſion of adverſe events has condemned to oblivion.

At laſt, after proceeding a few leagues above Mayapour, the gardens and ſumptuous palaces, which meet the eye, announce our approach to the capital of the Eaſt, the metropolis of the Engliſh empire in Aſia, and the fineſt colony in the world. The magnificence of the edifices, the luxury which has converted the banks of the river into delightful gardens, and the coſtlineſs and elegance of their decorations, all denote the opulence and power of the conquerors of India and the maſters of the Ganges.

The windings of this river conceal in ſome degree the town of Calcutta, which we do not perceive till we are within a ſhort diſtance of it. Fort-William, the fineſt fortreſs that exiſts out of Europe, preſents itſelf immediately to the ſight, which it aſtoniſhes by its grandeur and the ſplendour of the buildings, that are ſeen above its ramparts. The houſes, which form the firſt front of the tower to the end of the glacis, are ſo many magnificent palaces, ſome of them having a periſtyle of four-and-twenty pillars. All theſe ſtructures, diſpoſed in an irregular line through a ſpace of more than a league, form an inconceivably ſtriking proſpect, and give to the town a moſt noble and majeſtic appearance.

Calcutta is the only European ſettlement of any importance on this bank of the Ganges: the other nations have fixed upon the left ſide, while the Eng-

liſh alone have preferred the right. Whatever were the cauſes of this preference, the ſituation is ill-choſen. The ground is not ſufficiently raiſed above the level of the river, and frequently, in the high tides, the eſplanade which ſeparates the citadel from the town, if not totally inundated, is at leaſt covered with water in different parts ſo as to be impaſſable.

The air of Calcutta is by no means healthy, its poſition between the river and a large lake in its rear ſubjecting it to the influence of unwholeſome exhalations: but the European inhabitants remedy this defect by living in the country. There is however one inconvenience that cannot be remedied, which is the ſituation of its port. This ſtands exactly at the turn of two points, which augment the violence of the current in every ſtate of the tide. The bar is frequently here of ſufficient ſtrength to drive the veſſels from their moorings. The currents being extremely violent, particularly in July and Auguſt, the time of the melting of the ſnow on the mountains in the interior parts of the country, the firſt effect of the flood-tide at theſe periods is, not only to ſtop the courſe of the river, but to ſurmount it with ſo much force as to require a rapid courſe of its own. Bengal lies ſo low, that when the ſea, increaſed by theſe torrents, ruſhes in this manner into the bed of the river, its violence is irreſiſtible. The ebb current, meeting a ſimilar obſtacle, has at firſt a tendency to raiſe itſelf, but the flood being impelled with a ſuperior force, gains the aſcendency and paſſes over it. From this ſhock reſults a very heavy and foaming ſurge, which the tide puſhes before it with a prodigious rapidity, to the imminent danger of every boat that is not prudent enough to keep out of its way.

This bar has never its full effect, but on one ſide

of the river at a time; and the mischief it occasions may be avoided by taking the side on which it is weakest, which may easily be perceived. Every salient angle in the windings of the river, presenting an obstacle to its progress, throws it towards the contrary bank, and it continues thus till repelled by another projection, which turns it again. The Indians flock to the borders of the river, impatient to wet themselves with the water, which they believe to be salutary, and which they sprinkle over their bodies with devotion, uttering as they do it exclamations of joy.

Calcutta is situated so as to receive the whole force of the bar, which sometimes, and especially in the spring-tides, is very great. To render this anchorage as wretched as possible, it is interspersed with numerous sand-banks, even opposite to the fort and the town. The necessary operations of the port are thus checked; and when the depth of the river is reduced by the ebb, its course, obstructed by these impediments, increases in rapidity, and occasions innumerable accidents, such as destruction of boats, damage of vessels, loss of anchors, &c.

I was witness to an instance of this sort, which put the whole anchorage into confusion. The parias, which are generally numerous, moor themselves above the European ships, opposite the Black Town. They are usually fastened together, and thus present to the current a long line of vessels, of which the cables act together. This practice is not unaccompanied with risk, but it prevents the vessels from yawing, that is, swinging from one side to the other, tracing an arc of a circle, of which the anchor is the centre, and the cable the radius. This motion renders the strain upon the cable unequal, often drags the anchor, and is the occasion, when any other vessel is within the extent of the arc thus

deſcribed, of very ſerious miſchief. In this view therefore the practice of faſtening theſe veſſels together is of advantage. But unfortunately, at the time of which I ſpeak, the cable of one of the parias, at the extremity of the line, parted, and the veſſel immediately fell athwart the hawſe of the next. Their cables are generally good, but their anchors are abominable: that of the ſecond paria gave way, and two were thus adrift. The reſt followed in ſucceſſion, and in a quarter of an hour they were all in diſorder, to the number of a hundred and fifty at leaſt. In this condition they could make no effectual reſiſtance to the current, and were driven forcibly againſt the neareſt European ſhips at anchor behind them. The crews of theſe ſhips encountered them with hatchets, cutting and damaging in every way ſuch as faſtened on them: the number however was too great; the tide threw them athwart the hawſe of thoſe that were moored, thus carrying away their bowſprits, while the anchors and cables, unequal to ſuch an exertion, alſo gave way. The whole was now a ſcene of diſorder: the ſhips mixed with the parias, and nothing was heard but the noiſe of maſts and yards breaking. Some had the precaution to run aground, others continued to increaſe the confuſion, from which few ſucceeded in eſcaping entirely. The direction of the tide exempted ſuch only as were out of the ſtream; all the reſt ſhared in the danger. Let the reader figure to himſelf nearly three hundred veſſels turned ſuddenly adrift, endeavouring to grapple with each other, and carried away at the ſame time by the current with a rapidity that was ſure to be the deſtruction of all ſuch as ſhould ſtrike upon the ſand-banks; let him add to this, the cries, oaths, imprecations, and blaſphemies of the crews of ſo many nations, ſpeaking different

languages, without underſtanding each other, and he will have a faint idea of the ſcene that was then before me. Had the veſſels that were driven from their moorings thrown out the anchors which they had ſtill on board, they would all inevitably have been loſt; but they had the wiſdom to retain them till they were clear of their companions; and, as ſoon as they found themſelves free, they anchored wherever they could till the return of the tide, or aſſiſtance ſhould be ſent from the port. I happened to be on board my veſſel at the beginning of the confuſion. I was at anchor in the middle of the river, and nearly in the centre of the harbour, in a ſituation in which I could not poſſibly have avoided the general fate, had not a circumſtance luckily determined me upon taking meaſures to withdraw from the peril, which I perceived approaching. A large Engliſh ſhip, removing from the crowd, compelled me to the only ſtep that could poſſibly have ſaved me; for it came towards me with ſo much rapidity, that I had ſcarcely time to cut my cable with an axe, to prevent a rencontre that might have proved fatal to us both. I ſuffered my veſſel to drift, without anchoring again till I got below the citadel, to a diſtance of a mile and a half. Here I moored with two anchors, and remained in ſafety till order was re-eſtabliſhed at Calcutta, when I returned to my ſtation.

An accident of this kind is the moſt fortunate event that can happen for the officers of the port. They firſt fell, either of themſelves, or by means of their Blacks, the anchors, that may be wanted, and then take a declaration from each captain, ſpecifying thoſe which he has loſt, their weight and marks, a deſcription of the ends of the cables which are faſtened to them, the ſpot near which they may be expected to be found, and in ſhort every particular

that may assist in their recovery. This declaration is formally registered, and the captains hear no more of the matter.

I lost five in the course of three weeks; and I did not fail, as to the first two, to make the declarations which were required. Each time I had no doubt, when I left the office, that the anchor in question was as safe as if on board my vessel, and that I should certainly have it the moment I claimed it. After losing two, I thought I had a right to demand one, and I requested that the first might be raised, offering at the same time to pay the expenses.

The person to whom I addressed myself was an ingenuous sort of personage, who plundered upon principle: he believed, that to regulate his conduct by honour or honesty was merely to be a dupe, injuring himself without benefit to any one, for that others would continue to cheat if he did not. He accordingly laughed at my simplicity, and politely advised me to think no more of my anchors. As the loss however was of importance to me, and it would require a large sum to replace them, I was loath to take this advice, and I redoubled my inquiries and complaints. I had to apply to the port-captain T***, whose honesty was proverbial: he had amassed in this way a considerable fortune, and had since been seized with scruples as to the irregular proceedings of the officers of the port. His conscience did not urge him to the restitution of what he had acquired, but he wished to prevent others from doing the same. This was by no means agreeable to his colleagues, who, jealous of all interference in their concerns, paid little regard to the commands of an aged captain, whose physical and moral activity was very unequal to the task of watching over them; and thus,

with all the honeſty of their chief, the ſubalterns were knaves.

Mr. T***, in the Engliſh manner, *damning his eyes and ſoul*, ſwore that *my anchors ſhould be found and returned to me.* The firſt part of his oath was accompliſhed; but the ſecond was diſperſed by the winds, for I never ſaw my anchors again. He very obligingly gave me an order to be ſupplied with a ſloop, divers Blacks, and a marine officer, to enable me to raiſe them myſelf. With this I returned in high ſpirits to the office of the port, where, after waiting half an hour, a perſon came to ſpeak to me, who read the order twice over, and then carried it to a ſecond, who alſo read it and ſent it to a third, who was buſy, and anſwered *very well.* It was not till an hour more, that, ſeeing me reſolved to wait, this laſt took off his ſpectacles, and, approaching me, inquired my buſineſs. I told him that I had brought an order from Mr. T***, which would inform him. *Very well*, ſaid he; and taking up the order, he put on his ſpectacles, after wiping them for ſome time, read the paper twice, returned it to its place, repeated his *very well*, and turned his back upon me.

I begged him to give directions on the ſubject, and inform me when I ſhould be furniſhed with the articles mentioned in the paper; adding, that it was a matter of urgency, as my veſſel was lying at ſingle anchor, and that I had not another on board. The fatal *very well* was all the anſwer I could obtain. The perſon to whom I had originally applied, and who had adviſed me to think no more of my anchors, now came in, and took up the order; after aſking permiſſion of the other, who replied by a ſlight inclination of the head and the two words he had uſed with me: it ſeemed indeed as if he knew no other. At laſt I was directed to call again the next day.

I immediately provided myself with new anchors to insure the safety of my vessel: and, on the morrow, faithful to my appointment, I waited on Mr. *Very-well*, who at this time did not utter a word. An apprenticed pilot told me, that he was sent to attend me. I left the office without delay, and hastened to the sloop that was alloted me, with a diver and twenty Blacks. In passing my vessel, I took also ten of the best of my crew, and two boats of the country, which were then in my employ, which I manned with my own people, placing an officer in each. Arrived at the spot where I had lost my anchor, I endeavoured in vain by the assistance of the men belonging to the port to find them. Their awkwardness was so great, and appeared so unnatural, that I suspected some trick. I therefore ordered my officers in the boats to drag, pointing to the place near which I supposed one of the anchors to be sunk, and they found it at the first attempt. The diver was then sent to examine its situation, and fasten to it a rope with a sliding knot; but he had scarcely reached the bottom, when the log-line which I had employed to drag with lost its hold. I now saw, that it had been privately ordered, that I should not succeed. My men dragged again, and again found the anchor: but while I was preparing the slip-knot, the pilot, on pretence of assisting me, drew the log-line against the side of the sloop, and it broke. We were thus obliged a third time to recommence the attempt, and the diver made another fruitless trial to fasten the rope; at last he pretended that the anchor was sunk too deep in the mud, and said, that he was too much fatigued to dive any more. During these operations the flood-tide had been increasing, and it was now so strong, that it was necessary to suspend our efforts. The pilot agreed to leave the sloop at an-

chor on the ſpot, to ſerve as a mark in reſuming our attempts on the morrow : to which I conſented. At day-break however I looked in vain for the ſloop ; it was no longer there. I haſtened to the port-officers, and was told, that they were wholly ignorant what was become of it, and they pretended to ſend in every direction to make inquiries : a trouble they might have ſaved themſelves, for they knew perfectly well where it was. On the third day, they informed me, that the ſloop was found, and they added to this information an account of the expenſes which had been incurred, and which muſt immediately be paid ; ſo much a day for the ſloop, ſo much for the pilot for ſo many days, ſo much for the Laſcars *ditto*, ſo much for the diver *ditto*, ſo much for port-charges, ſo much for the furniture of the ſloop, ſo much for the cable, which broke, ſo much for the anchor, which was loſt in conſequence, ſo much for the Blacks who recovered the veſſel, ſo much for thoſe who brought it back to the port, ſo much for repairing the damages it had ſuſtained ; in ſhort, there was no end to the items, of which the ſum total amounted to five hundred and ſixty-ſeven ſicca rupees. It was uſeleſs to diſpute theſe charges ; the buſineſs muſt be ended and the money paid. When I returned to the officer for the purpoſe, one of the clerks pointed with his pen to Mr. *Very-well*, who took it without ſaying a word, caſt his eye over the bill, counted the rupees, ſaluted me with a *very well*, and diſmiſſed me ; determined in my heart never to attempt the recovery of another anchor, though I ſhould loſe them by dozens. This inſtance was enough : I had loſt in expenſes more than the value of the anchor, which I had dragged for to no purpoſe, and was unable to recover any of the others.

I complained loudly of this impoſition ; but was

anſwered only by a ſhrug of the ſhoulders, and the cold conſolation, "It is a ſad thing for you, but every body muſt live." In reality, foreign veſſels never recover any thing which is loſt in this anchorage. Some Engliſh captains, indeed, who are favoured, may occaſionally experience a better treatment; but theſe exceptions are few. The officers of the port ſeize the opportunity of low water to raiſe the anchors that have been loſt, and they ſell them without ſcruple to whoever may want them.

I hope to be excuſed this ſlight ſally of reſentment, which the recollection of the injuſtice of which I have been the ſpectator and the victim has torn from me: I could not reſiſt the impulſe, nor abſtain from the diſcloſure of ſuch odious practices, though at the riſk of offending certain individuals whom I have avoided naming. It is the laſt time, however, that I ſhall cite any one before the tribunal of the reader; hereafter I ſhall leave to that of their own conſcience thoſe who, renouncing every ſentiment of honour and hoſpitality, can employ the portion of authority with which they are intruſted, in robbing at the diſtance of five thouſand leagues from their country, the people whom they ought to protect. At the extremity of Aſia all Europeans are countrymen, or at leaſt ſhould conſider themſelves as ſuch.

The citadel of Calcutta is an octagon, on the firſt plan of Vauban. Five of the faces are regular, while the forms of the other three, which front the river, are according to the fancy of the engineer, by whom the fortreſs was built. As no approach is to be feared on this ſide, and the citadel can only be attacked by water, the river coming up to the glacis, it was merely neceſſary to preſent to veſſels making ſuch attempt a ſuperiority of fire, and to provide the means of diſcovering them at a diſtance,

in order to diſable them the moment they ſhould arrive within cannon-ſhot. Theſe purpoſes have been attained by giving the citadel towards the water the form of a large ſalient angle, the faces of which enfilade the courſe of the river. From theſe faces the guns continue to bear upon the object, till it approaches very near the capital: but then they are flanked on each ſide by a front parallel to the border of the river, which would fire with great effect on veſſels lying with their broadſides oppoſite to it. This part is likewiſe defended by adjoining baſtions and a counter-guard that covers them. The five regular fronts are on the land-ſide; the baſtions have all very ſalient orillons, behind which are retired circular flanks extremely ſpacious, and an inverſe double flank at the height of the berme, in the ſame ſituation as the tenaille of Belidor. This double flank would be an excellent defence, and would the better ſerve to retard the paſſage of the ditch, as from its form it cannot be enfiladed. The orillon preſerves it from the effect of ricochet-ſhot, and it is not to be ſeen from any parallel. The aſſailants muſt gain poſſeſſion of the covered way, make ſtrong lodgments there, and conſtruct batteries of a ſuperior force, before they can ſilence it, for it can only be cannonaded from the counter-ſcarp. The berme oppoſite the curtain ſerves as a road to it, and contributes to the defence of the ditch, like a fauſſe-braie. The ditch is dry, with a cunette in the middle, which receives the water of the Ganges by means of two ſluices, that are commanded by the fort: the counterſcarp and covered way are excellent. From ſome air-holes which I ſaw in the ramparts, I ſuppoſe the maſter-gallery to have been conſtructed behind the counter-forts of the revêtement. The glacis are mined, if I may judge from the gates or entrances to the galleries which I

ſaw at the re-entering angles of the covered way, on the ſide towards the country: every curtain is covered with a large half-moon, without flanks or bonnet, or redoubt; but the faces mount thirteen pieces of artillery each, thus giving to the defence of theſe ravelins a fire of ſix-and-twenty guns. The demi-baſtions, which terminate the five regular fronts on each ſide, are covered by a counter-guard, of which the faces, like the half-moons, are pierced with thirteen embraſures. Theſe counter-guards are connected with two redoubts, conſtructed in the place of arms of the adjacent re-entering angles: the whole is faced and paliſadoed with care, is kept in admirable condition, and can make a vigorous defence againſt any army however formidable. The advanced works are executed on an extenſive ſcale, and the angles of the half-moons, being extremely acute, project a great way into the country, ſo as to be in view of each other beyond the flanked angle of the polygon, and take the trenches in the rear at an early period of the approach.

The name of this citadel is Fort William. It is larger and capable of a more regular and ſcientific defence than that of Fort St. George at Madras. It is not, like Fort St. George, filled with houſes, but contains only the buildings that are neceſſary, ſuch as the reſidence of the governor, quarters for the officers and troops, and arſenals. Excluſively of theſe, the interior of the fort is perfectly open, and offers nothing to the ſight but ſuperb graſs-plots, gravel walks planted occaſionally with trees, balls, bombs, cannons, and whatever can give to the place a grand, noble, and military appearance. Each gate has a houſe over it deſtined for the reſidence of a major.

Theſe houſes, like every other in the fort, are ſo

many magnificent palaces. At the period of my laſt voyage, the governor was colonel Morgan, who filled the ſtation with honour, and behaved to ſtrangers with great politeneſs. One day, on leaving table, we accompanied him to his cloſet where was preſerved with extraordinary care a ſuperb full-length portrait of Lewis XV. in complete armour: it had been taken at Pondicherry, and had thence been removed to Bengal. The colonel was eager to draw my attention to it. I was pleaſed with the reſpect that was paid to it, but felt at the ſame time a ſentiment of regret at ſeeing it in the hands of our enemies: it ſeemed as if his majeſty was a priſoner of war. This idea re-called ſtrongly to my memory the ſeries of our defeats in Aſia, and forced from me a ſigh, which did not eſcape the governor; but his delicate and conſtant politeneſs ſoon diſſipated the melancholy impreſſion which theſe reflections wrought upon my mind.

The governor-general of the Engliſh ſettlements, eaſt of the Cape of Good Hope, reſides at Calcutta. As there is no palace yet built for him, he lives in a houſe on the eſplanade oppoſite the citadel. The houſe is handſome, but by no means equal to what it ought to be for a perſonage of ſo much importance. Many private individuals in the town have houſes as good; and if the governor were diſpoſed to any extraordinary luxury, he muſt curb his inclination for want of the neceſſary accommodation of room. The houſe of the governor at Pondicherry is much more magnificent.

As we enter the town, a very extenſive ſquare opens before us, with a large piece of water in the middle, for the public uſe. The pond has a graſs-plot round it, and the whole is incloſed by a wall breaſt-high, with a railing on the top. The ſides of this incloſure are each nearly five hundred yards in

length. The ſquare itſelf is compoſed of magnificent houſes, which render Calcutta not only the handſomeſt town in Aſia, but one of the fineſt in the world. One ſide of the ſquare conſiſts of a range of buildings occupied by perſons in civil employments under the company, ſuch as writers in the public offices. Part of the ſide towards the river is taken up by the old fort, which was the firſt citadel built by the Engliſh after their eſtabliſhment in Bengal. It is an indifferent ſquare, with extremely ſmall baſtions, that can mount at moſt but one gun, though the ſides are pierced for two. The fort is without a ditch, and is no longer uſed for a fortification: the ramparts are converted into gardens, and on the baſtions and in the inſide of the fort, houſes have been built for perſons in the ſervice of the government, particularly the officers of the cuſtom-houſe, who tranſact their buſineſs there. Theſe fortifications are ſo much reduced from the ſcale on which they were originally conſtructed, that the line of defence is now only a hundred and forty or a hundred and fifty yards in length, and the front not more than two hundred. Though this ſmall fort was much ſuperior to that which the Engliſh had built at firſt at Madras, it could not protect them from the reſentment of the nabob of Bengal, Suraja Dowla, with whom they were at war: it was taken, and ſuch of the Engliſh troops as eſcaped fled for ſafety to Cadjery, where alſo they were beſieged. The conquerer, when he got poſſeſſion of the fort at Calcutta, had the priſoners which he took there thruſt one upon another into a hole, outſide the fort, from which thoſe only were fortunate enough to come out alive who happened to be uppermoſt in the heap; the reſt were all ſuffocated. In remembrance of ſo flagrant an act of barbarity, the Engliſh, who were conquerers in their turn, erected a mon-

ument between the old fort and the right wing of the building occupied by the civil officers of the company, on the very ſpot where the deed was committed. It is a pyramid, truncated at the top, and ſtanding upon a ſquare pedeſtal, having a deſign in ſculpture on each of its ſides, and an inſcription in the Engliſh and Mooriſh languages, deſcribing the occaſion on which it was erected. It is ſurrounded with an iron railing to prevent acceſs to it, has ſhrubs planted about it, and exhibits a mournful appearance, not unſuitable to the event which it is intended to commemorate.

Cloſe to the old fort is the theatre, which does not accord in appearance with the general beauty of the town, and in which there are ſeldom dramatic repreſentations for want of performers.

There are two churches of the Engliſh eſtabliſhment at Calcutta, one of which is built in a ſupurb and regular ſtyle of architecture, with a circular range of pillars in front, of the doric order, and beautiful in their proportion; the cornice and architrave, ornamented with the triglyphs, are in the ſame excellent taſte, and the edifice altogether is a model of grandeur and elegance.

There are alſo, beſides theſe regular eſtabliſhments, a catholic church belonging to the Portugueſe miſſion, another of the Greek perſuaſion, in which the ſervice is performed by monks of the order of St. Baſil, an Armenian conventicle, a ſynagogue, ſeveral moſques, and a great number of pagodas: ſo that nearly all the religions in the world are aſſembled in this capital.

The Black Town is to the north of Calcutta, and contiguous to it: it is extremely large; and its population, at the time of my laſt voyage, was computed at ſix hundred thouſand Indians, women and children included.

So conſiderable a town ought to poſſeſs a vigi-

lant police; but in this reſpect it is very defective. Thoſe who diſturb the public tranquillity are indeed apprehended, but the condition of the town itſelf is diſguſtingly unclean. Moſt of the ſtreets have a ſmall canal on each ſide, ſerving as a drain both for them and the houſes, that could not otherwiſe be inhabited, on account of their dampneſs; for the Ganges, in the great ſwells, riſes to the level of many of the ſtreets, ſo that it is impoſſible to dig any where without finding water. Theſe canals, which are a foot and half, and in ſome places two feet wide, and not more than three deep, are reſervoirs of filth, that emit the moſt unwholeſome exhalations. Such animals as die in the ſtreets or in the houſes are thrown into them, and they lie there and putrify. From want, ſickneſs, or accident, many a poor wretch of the human ſpecies alſo expires in the ſtreets: I have ſeen an inſtance of this, where the body has remained two days without being taken away by the police. When this happens, the remains are thrown in like manner into the canals, and thus add to the putrefaction. The natives are ſufficiently cleanly as to their perſons and houſes; but, having removed from the latter every thing which would occaſion filth, they conceive themſelves to have done all that is neceſſary. They leave even their ordure at the door or in the ſtreet, and, though they complain of the ſtench, will not give themſelves the trouble to remove it.

Theſe remains of men and animals, engendering putrefaction in the midſt of the living, would eventually produce the plague, if the jackals, who ſometimes traverſe the ſtreets by throngs in the night, howling dreadfully and devouring every thing in their way, did not prevent it. I have ſeen the body of a poor creature lying dead at my door (the one I have juſt ſpoken of) ſerve two nights for

food to ſome of theſe hungry animals. The firſt night they carried away the head and other parts of it. The body, without limbs, was rolling in the duſt all the next day, and trodden upon indiſcriminately by the men and beaſts that paſſed, without any perſon having the humanity to remove it: the ſecond night it was either entirely devoured or carried away, and I was relieved from ſo diſguſting a ſpectacle.

What is not conſumed in this manner by the jackals remains for the ravens and eagles, with which the town abounds. They are ſeen on the houſes, watching for every thing that is thrown into the ſtreets, and they will drop without fear into the middle of a crowd to ſeize their prey. Great care is taken not to deſtroy them, as they contribute to the cleanlineſs of the town, and in that view are extremely uſeful. They are in general daring and voracious. I have ſeen a raven, in the bazar called *territa*, ſeize upon a fiſh in the hands of an old negro woman who had juſt purchaſed it. I lived oppoſite this market-place, the neighbourhood of which was the reſort of an immenſe number of eagles, attracted thither by the ſmell which aroſe from the place. One day my cook, coming acroſs the yard with a roaſted fowl, brought nothing to table but the diſh; the fowl was in the talons of an eagle, that, having robbed him of it, flew with it to the top of the houſe and tranquilly feaſted upon it before our eyes.

All the houſes in India have *argamaſſe* roofs, that is to ſay, are flat, with a baluſtrade round them. It is there that the inhabitants in the morning and evening take the air. Some are ornamented with a circular range of pillars on the firſt ſtory, making a ſort of gallery, to which they retire when the heat of the day is over.

With reſpect to living, the fare is but indifferent at Calcutta. Proviſions for the table are confined to butcher's meat, a fowl now and then, but little or no game, and ſcarcely a greater quantity of fiſh. Mutton is almoſt univerſally the preferable and ſtanding diſh.

In the ſummer a ſwarm of flies of every kind prevails, and is extremely tormenting. The muſkitoes beſet one ſo obſtinately, are ſo eaſily provoked and ſo extremely inſatiable, that too many precautions cannot be taken againſt them. To be ſecure from their attacks, it is the cuſtom to wear within doors, if one ſtays any time, whether for meals or any other purpoſe, paſteboard round the legs. The moſt eager after fleſh is the large blue fly, which ſettles upon the diſhes and infects the meat, that is obliged on that account to be covered: it will contend with the gueſts for the victuals they are eating, and will follow the morſels as they convey them to their mouths. It is equally remarkable for thirſt, and will throw itſelf into a goblet the moment any kind of liquor is poured into it: to prevent this the goblet is covered with a ſilver lid made for the purpoſe. In ſhort, theſe inſects are inſupportable; they realize every thing which Virgil has ſaid of the harpies, and twenty times, by their perſecution, have they driven me from the table.

To chaſe away the flies, and occaſion a freer circulation of the air, many houſes have a large fan hanging from the ceiling over the eating table, of a ſquare form, and balanced on an axle fitted to the upper part of it. A ſervant, ſtanding at one end of the room, puts it in motion by means of a cord which is faſtened to it, in the ſame manner as he would ring a bell. Beſides this, there is a ſervant behind the chair of each individual with another kind of fan,

made of a branch of the palm-tree. The ſtalk ſerves for a handle, and the leaves, faſtened together and cut into a round or ſquare ſhape, give it the appearance of a flag. By theſe contrivances a little freſh air is procured.

It is chiefly in Bengal, where ſmoking after meals is cuſtomary, that the *hooka* is in uſe. Every *hooka-badar* prepares ſeparately that of his maſter in an adjoining apartment, and, entering all together with the deſſert, they range them round the table. For half an hour there is a continued clamour, and nothing is diſtinctly heard but the cry of ſilence, till the noiſe ſubſides and the converſation aſſumes its uſual tone. It is ſcarcely poſſible to ſee through the cloud of ſmoke which fills the apartment. The effect produced by theſe circumſtances is whimſical enough to a ſtranger, and if he has not his hooka he will find himſelf in an awkward and unpleaſant ſituation. The rage of ſmoking extends even to the ladies; and the higheſt compliment they can pay a man is to give him preference by ſmoking his hooka. In this caſe it is a point of politeneſs to take off the mouth-piece he is uſing, and ſubſtitute a freſh one, which he preſents to the lady with his hooka, who ſoon returns it. This compliment is not always of trivial importance; it ſometimes ſignifies a great deal to a friend, and often ſtill more to a huſband. Tobacco forms but a ſmall part of the ingredients that are burnt in this inſtrument: dried fruits, ſugar, and other things are made uſe of, which, added to the roſe-water with which the tube of the inſtrument is wetted, give a taſte and fragrance to the ſmoke that are extremely agreeable; the ſmoke too, by paſſing through the water before it reaches the mouth, acquires a coolneſs that renders it ſtill more pleaſant.

Conveyance by the palanquin is in uſe at Bengal,

as on the coaſt of the peninſula ; but Calcutta, excluſively of this mode, abounds with all ſorts of carriages, chariots, whiſkies, and phaëtons, which occaſion in the evening as great a buſtle as in one of the principal towns of Europe. There are alſo a great number of ſaddle-horſes, ſome of the Perſian breed, of exquiſite beauty, but no Arabians, except a ſmall ſort called *pooni*, which are very much in vogue for phaëtons. All theſe animals are faulty ; many of them vicious ; for they are truſted to Mooriſh grooms, who know indeed how to feed and fatten them, but who teach them at the ſame time the moſt incorrigible habits. A friend of mine having given me the free uſe of his ſtud, his Mooriſh grooms, after following me one day to the public walk, as was uſual, were ſo diſpleaſed with the quickneſs of my pace, that they determined not to be expoſed to it again. I know not what they did to the horſes, but I could never, ſubſequently to this period, make any of them go faſter than a walk. Having a deſire a few days afterwards to take a ride, I was ſcarcely out of the ſtable, and had the reins in my hand, when my horſe began his capers. I applied the ſpur, and he was ſtill more reſtive. I patted and coaxed him ; it was of no uſe. I diſmounted ; I examined the bridle, the bit, and the curb ; I even took it off, and replaced it myſelf : I removed the ſaddle, to ſee that nothing improper had been put underneath ; I inſpected his tail and his ſhoes : every thing was right, and as it ought to be ; and all this time the animal was perfectly quiet. I mounted him again, and he readily ſet off walking without waiting to be told ; but the moment I attempted to make him trot, he inſtantly recommenced his tricks. I then applied the ſpur unſparingly to his ſide ; upon which, without advancing a ſtep, he played ſuch antics, that I thought he would have killed me. Yet this was

the ſame horſe I had rode two days before, and which had then ſhown in every reſpect the utmoſt gentleneſs and obedience. I reſigned him to the Moor, who immediately led him in a canter to the ſtable. I ſhall make no comment on this ſingular incident, and ſhould in vain be aſked to explain it. I relate preciſely what I ſaw, and no more. A ſimilar circumſtance occurred to me at Yanaon with a horſe of Mr. Demars.

The Engliſh have begun to improve the breed of the Bengal horſes: they have croſſed the Perſian mares with Engliſh ſtallions, and, to excite emulation, have eſtabliſhed races ſimilar to thoſe of Newmarket and Epſom. In 1794, I ſaw a horſe that had been brought from England contend on the courſe with a moſt noble animal of the Perſian breed; but the Engliſh one conquered, and won, in two ſucceſſive heats every bet that was made, to the great joy of its countrymen, who cried in tranſport, "Old England for ever!" It ſhould be obſerved, that this was only a week after the horſe had been landed. Notwithſtanding its confinement on board, and the fatigue of ſo long a voyage, it was ſtill able to contend ſucceſsfully with a freſh and well trained Arabian: a proof that the Engliſh breed ſurpaſſes that of every other country in fleetneſs.

Though carriages are ſo numerous at Calcutta, they are never uſed for travelling. Almoſt all journeys are made by water. Bengal is ſo interſected with rivers and canals, that you can go to any part of it in a boat. For this purpoſe the richer claſs of people make uſe of a conveyance called *bazaras*. Nothing can exceed the elegance and convenience of theſe little veſſels. They have commodious apartments, like a houſe, and are followed by a large boat containing a kitchen and its furniture, ſo that a perſon may travel in this country

more pleaſantly than in any other part of the world, and without experiencing greater fatigue, than if he were all the time in his own houſe.

A great many ſhips are built at Calcutta, and in the yards are ſeveral ſtocks well filled; but theſe veſſels are very expenſive. They are extremely ſolid, and are made of teak wood, which has the quality of rotting much more ſlowly than oak. Veſſels which are built of it will accordingly laſt a very long time, if kept from running aground; for the wood is oily, which prevents it from decaying; but being free from knots, it ſplits ſo eaſily, that a ſingle ſtroke of an axe upon one end of a beam a foot thick will divide it quite through to the other end. Oak on the contrary is full of knots, which add to its power of reſiſtance; but it is by no means ſo durable as teak.

The privilege of the company is ſo great as to prevent any individual from trading to any part of Europe, or at leaſt to England; but from one place to another in India the trade is free, and is very conſiderable both to China and elſewhere. The river Hoogly is in conſequence covered with veſſels, which add to the opulence and induſtry of Calcutta. The wealth of this place is indeed extraordinary; ſilver money they will ſcarcely deign to mention; they reckon only by the *gulmohur*, a piece of gold of the value of ſixteen rupees, or forty-two livres, eſtimating the piece-of-eight at five livres five ſous. The Indians have the practice of clipping the coin, like the Jews in Europe, ſo that, on receiving a ſum of money, it is neceſſary to be provided with a *ſerraff*, who weighs and values the different pieces.

The money of the people is the *cowries* of the Maldive-Iſlands. The trade of Bengal is in the hands of the *ſircars*, who are there what the *dobiches*

are on the coaſt. Theſe ſircars are Bramins, who loſe no part of their dignity or importance by becoming merchants. They are known by a ſtring of cotton, of ſeven threads, which they wear next their ſkin, in the manner of a ſcarf, from right to left, and are aſſiſted by clerks, who have the privilege of compoſing a ſeparate caſt, and look upon themſelves as a diviſion of that of the Bramins, ſubordinate indeed to them, but ſuperior to all other caſts.

Bengal is at preſent the true country of the Bramins. Their names terminate almoſt always in *ram;* a diſtinction of honour anſwering nearly to the French *de*, the German *von*, or the *don* of the Spaniards, with this difference, that it follows the name inſtead of preceding it. The name of my ſircar was Chiſſou; but, adding the final ſyllable of etiquette, he was called Chiſſouram. He was intelligent, honeſt, and, what is a very rare quality in a ſircar, but little greedy after gain.

The eaſe with which theſe people learn any thing is wonderful: they all both ſpeak and write the French, Engliſh, Portugueſe, Mooriſh, Malabar, and their own ſacred language; which laſt no one underſtands that does not belong to their caſt. Some modern authors, and particularly the Engliſh, have made us acquainted with paſſages of their ſacred books, their *Veidam* and their *Ezourveidam;* and in the national library at Paris is a tranſlation of the *Cormovedam*. I reſpect the profound knowledge of theſe authors; I pretend not to call their honour in queſtion; but would rather believe, ſince they affirm it, that the tranſlations they give us are authentic, or at leaſt that they think ſo themſelves. I ſhall only remark, how much it is to be wiſhed, that this ſacred language of the Bramins were publicly known, that we may all be enabled to profit

by the light which muſt reſult from an acquaintance with the annals of ſo ancient and ſo learned a people. I am far from wiſhing to throw doubts upon ſuch ſuppoſed books of theirs as have been made known to us: my opinion, beſides, would have but little weight againſt authorities ſo great; yet it appears to me, that whoever has been perſonally acquainted with the Bramins, and has ſtudied their character and prejudices, muſt be ſtruck with the unuſual marks of confidence which the communication of ſuch paſſages implies, and the inferences to which ſuch confidence would lead. If a perſon thus acquainted with them were diſpoſed to make objections as to theſe paſſages, he might ſay, "The Bramins are by no means communicative; it is a point of their religion even, to conceal from all the world the knowledge of their language and their books. We muſt therefore ſuppoſe, that ſome of their chiefs, for they alone have the cuſtody of the books and the law, have conquered the averſion they naturally entertained for foreign caſts; have loſt all remorſe at ſo flagrant a renunciation of their precepts; and have choſen to riſk their being excommunicated from their caſt, which they value above life itſelf, rather than diſoblige a ſtranger, who might have aſked them for ſo important communications."

I am aware, that theſe writings are now matters of general notoriety; that the moſt celebrated authors are eager to propagate them: fragments of theſe ſacred books are printed in almoſt every publication; travellers have even profeſſed to have acquired a perfect knowledge of the ſanſcrit language at Bengal. All this is ſo common, that I ought to believe it, and I do ſo, though theſe Bramins are greatly under the influence of their religion, which impoſes a law upon them to conceal from us what

we thus pretend to know; though a much lighter fault will subject them to the loss of their cast, a calamity which they will sacrifice every thing to avoid, or, when this has happened, to regain the privilege; though even when lost irrecoverably, the person so situated still remains invariably attached to it, and does not on that account the less completely despise all other casts; consequently, never endeavours to avenge himself by betraying his own: in short, though it were possible to believe, that, to get rid of the importunities of those who solicited them, they had entered into an agreement among themselves, to communicate merely indifferent circumstances, with the hope of being left quiet as to other matters, or had even invented what has been told us, for the express purpose of putting an end to the inquiries of Europeans, by pretending to satisfy us, and thus conceal more effectually all knowledge of their real mysteries,—in spite of all this, can I do other than believe what has been told us by so many respectable authors? But let me be suffered once more to remark, that if the communications which the Bramins have made to us be true, they must have trangressed the laws of their religion; that they have so far betrayed their trust, they must have lost that inviolable attachment to it, which for so many ages has maintained in them the most profound secrecy upon the subject; that if the spirit of exclusion towards strangers be destroyed in them, the line of demarcation by which they were separated from the rest of the world must be destroyed; and, that if the secrets of their cast are unveiled, the respect which it has hitherto inspired will soon be lost and annihilated. Nothing is ever reverenced by the people but what is mysterious and concealed; and this is the foundation of the sacred opinion which is en-

tertained of the Bramins: the moment they ſhall be known, the ſentiment by which that opinion is maintained will be obliterated. This caſt then, which mocks the efforts of hiſtory to trace its origin, muſt quickly diſappear: and the genius of revolution, which has lately changed the face of Europe, would ſeem deſtined to extend his influence through the univerſe, to deſtroy opinions regarded as ſacred in the moſt diſtant parts of the globe, and to unveil a ſecret preſerved inviolable through a ſucceſſion of ages too great for the calculations of our chronology to reach.

The Bramins ſtill purſue their ſtudies at Benares, a town which maintains its celebrity on account of the learned who live there. The nabob of this country has entirely loſt his power, and is now merely the humble ſervant of the Engliſh company. But even were Benares to be laid low by ſome conquering arm, the Bramins, amidſt the din of war, which they have abjured, would not abandon their ſtudies. During all the revolutions which the Mogul Empire experienced, all the convulſions by which Bengal was diſtracted when invaded by mahometaniſm, theſe people, unchanged in their purſuits, their virtues, the mildneſs of their manners, and the ſecreſy of their doctrines, ſtedfaſt in the perſuaſion of the ſuperiority of their morals and their deſcent, never failed to obtain the admiration even of their victorious enemies, who, ſubmitting to the univerſal veneration which they ſaw paid to them, have acknowledged their own inferiority. Thus in a manner ſuperior to the accidents of the world and the revolutions of ſtates, they have maintained a ſupremacy over the minds of every nation. Without the empire gained by arms, they poſſeſs that of opinion; and, iſolated in the middle of the world, they have triumphed over time itſelf. And yet, with

ſo high a degree of glory, the reſult of ſo much patience and virtue, we muſt ſuppoſe they would ſacrifice this to ſatisfy the importunate curioſity of a few travellers, totally unknown to them, who had come from the remoteſt regions of the earth to inquire into their myſteries; that, in direct violation of the eſſential precepts of their religion, they would diſcard, in favour of theſe foreigners, a ſilence rendered ſacred by a ſeries of ages, and reveal ſecrets which were the foundation of a ſuperiority preſerved and tranſmitted by their anceſtors from the earlieſt periods of the world. What an inſtance of the inſtability of human affairs!

To conclude, if I have taken the liberty to hazard conjectures reſpecting the ſacred volumes of the Bramins, let me repeat, that it is no part of my intention to raiſe doubts as to the authenticity of ſuch tranſlations as we poſſeſs. I have no proofs againſt them. If I had, the reputation of the authors would not deter me from ſaying to the world, "Do not give credit to thoſe books; they are falſe." In the preſent caſe, I am ſo far from attempting to weaken the reſpect which is paid to them, that I have confined myſelf to reflections on the general character of the Bramins, and the inconſiſtency which their communications of this nature manifeſt: my concluſions evidently are leſs againſt the books themſelves than againſt the caſt.

The trade of Calcutta is very extenſive. It is through this channel that the company obtains the ſaltpetre, and all the muſlins which we ſee in Europe; while it exports to this part Spaniſh coins, gold thread, copper, lead, iron in bars and wrought, Engliſh manufactures of different ſorts for the uſe of the Europeans there, wine and brandy, ſea-ſalt, and marine ſtores of every kind. Individuals there obtain pepper and arrac from the coaſt of Malabar;

raw ſilks, nankeens, porcelain, and tea from China, to which place they ſend in return the cotton of the Malabar coaſt. The grain of Bengal they export to every part of India, receive ſilks from Surat, ſend muſlins and European commodities to Macao and the Phillippine iſlands, and give circulation to all theſe articles in the whole interior of Aſia. A commerce which extends to ſuch a variety of branches cannot fail to enrich thoſe who cultivate it, and accordingly Calcutta is the richeſt town in India. Private merchants, however, are not the moſt wealthy claſs of thoſe who reſide there; the company's ſervants are much richer, and become ſo much more rapidly.

A young man who comes from London in the capacity of writer, without a ſingle rupee in his pocket when he arrives, finds himſelf in four-and-twenty hours ſwimming in wealth. He is no ſooner landed than the ſircars offer him their purſes, which he is not tardy in accepting, and immediately he has his palanquin, his horſes, his ſervants, his cooks, and every accommodation. Theſe Bramins are well aware that the ſtranger will ſoon be in poſſeſſion of a good place, and in the courſe of a year or two (they will wait longer if neceſſary) will be able to repay them liberally. They urge him to expenſe, knowing that the deeper he is in their debt the more tractable they ſhall find him. It is true, they riſk the chance of his dying; but ſhould he live they will be amply remunerated. In the courſe of a twelve-month the young man will be ſent into the country, be inveſted with ſome office, ſuch as aſſiſtant collector, and be intruſted with the receipt of a diſtrict. This is what the ſircar was waiting for; he will follow his maſter in the exerciſe of his office, will procure without difficulty the management of the collection, and there is then no ſort of extortion

which he will ſcruple. Whatever place the young man may obtain, the ſircar will contrive to be his agent, and to raiſe an immenſe fortune by the exactions that are in his power. But to conceal theſe diſgraceful practices, which, if detected, might ſubject them to loſe their caſt, the Bramins pretend, that they are ſimply repaid, out of the ſalary of their maſter, the ſums they have advanced; and this ſalary he reſigns to them, reſerving merely a ſufficiency for his houſehold expenſes. This game continues till the ſircar is ſatisfied with the fortune he has amaſſed, when he takes leave of his maſter; or till the latter ſees into the treachery of his conduct, is diſguſted with it, and turns him away. The maſter then reſorts himſelf to the ſame means, and thus completes his own fortune in two or three years; ſo that the people experience a change only of oppreſſors, without being relieved from the oppreſſion. It ſhould be obſerved, that the ſircars of whom we are ſpeaking form but a ſmall part of the Bramins, and that the ſame character muſt not be ſuppoſed to extend to the learned, whoſe virtues are equal to their talents, and who would bluſh, even in their retirement, at the idea, not of a fair and honeſt courſe of trade, but of any practices in the ſmalleſt degree reſembling thoſe we have deſcribed. Yet, notwithſtanding the corruption and knavery of theſe ſircars, they are not the leſs unchangeably convinced of their own ſuperiority to all other men, whom they accordingly look upon with ſovereign contempt.

Of the different deſcriptions of perſons who acquire fortunes in the ſervice of the company, the moſt numerous are the military; but they arrive at opulence much more ſlowly, and in a degree greatly inferior to the civil officers. The habit of living in the country, the cuſtoms to which they muſt ſub-

mit, the manners they acquire, and other circumſtances, render it neceſſary for them to ſettle themſelves. Such as are called by their duty to ſtations at a great diſtance in the interior part of the country, and have no opportunity of enriching themſelves, ally themſelves by marriage to Indian women of the Mooriſh caſt. As the children from theſe alliances have often no fortune, that of their father conſiſting merely of his commiſſion, which is but a precarious inheritance, they are ſupported in that caſe by the Engliſh company, which has provided for the purpoſe an eſtabliſhment at Calcutta that is honourable to human nature, where the legitimate iſſue, both male and female, of any of its ſervants, receive a ſuitable education, and are taught all the uſeful accompliſhments: the boys are afterwards provided with ſituations according to their abilities and genius, and the girls ſettled in life, and ſometimes even ſent to Europe at the expenſe of the company, to finiſh their education. The good order and decency of this inſtitution have obtained it the praiſe of all who have attended to it. The military officers ſtationed at Calcutta, or in the neighbourhood, ſometimes intermarry with theſe girls, whoſe fathers it frequently happens they have been acquainted with. Such marriages are by no means uncommon; all who have acquired any fortune, whether civil officers or others, finding the neceſſity of a female companion to baniſh from their minds the remembrance of their country.

From a knowledge of this general predilection in favour of matrimony in India, the Engliſh, who are inclined to every ſort of ſpeculation, ſend thither annually whole cargoes of females, who are tolerably handſome, and are ſeldom ſix months in the country without getting huſbands. Theſe cargoes are impatiently expected by ſuch as, not liking the or-

phans, are tired of celibacy, and the look-out for the arrival of the ſhips is as eager, as it is in other places for a freight of merchandize to make purchaſes of goods. What is more extraordinary, theſe marriages are in general happy. The women, removed from Europe from a ſituation of mediocrity, often of unhappineſs, to a diſtant country, where they paſs ſuddenly into a ſtate of opulence, feel as they ought the ſentiments of gratitude due to the men, who ſhare with them their fortunes. They become both good wives and good mothers, and are therefore generally preferred to the natives, who are continually wiſhing for the luxuries in which they were brought up. Theſe matrimonial ventures afford the means of keeping up the white race at Bengal, and prevent the Portugueſe caſt from increaſing ſo faſt as on the coaſt. This caſt is called here *topas*, from the word *topi*, which ſignifies in the Portugueſe language a hat. The name is given to ſuch Indians as change their own for the European dreſs, and wear a hat inſtead of a turban.

The children that are the offspring of the Engliſh alliances with the women of India, are of no particular religion, though moſt inclined to that of England. Indeed they conſider themſelves as Engliſh altogether, and conſequently as greatly ſuperior in blood to the Portugueſe race. They are employed by the government in ſituations in the interior part of the country, at a diſtance from the capital, where they marry women of colour, and their children again become black, with an Engliſh family-name. This is true policy on the part of the company, which, conſcious that a population that is foreign to it muſt contain the ſeeds of its deſtruction, endeavours to people the country with a race of its own. The power of the company depends for its ſupport on a force which is not Engliſh; the com-

pany is ſenſible of this, but it is an evil which cannot be avoided; the hand of time can alone gradually furniſh the remedy, by deſtroying the averſion of Europeans to marriages with women of colour. Theſe marriages ſhould be encouraged, as a generation would thereby be produced, which, deſcending from Engliſh blood, would feel towards England a national attachment.

Meanwhile, till this revolution takes place, the company is obliged to truſt its ſafety to mercenary auxillaries, and to put into their hands weapons, which, on the firſt diſcontent, they may turn againſt their maſters. Fortunately for the company, the ſoldiers thus employed are of the Mooriſh caſt; a caſt that invaded and conquered the country ſhortly after the death of Mahomet, and has ſince entertained a perfect contempt for the natives who yielded to them, while theſe have retained on their part an inveterate hatred of their conquerors. The government turns this diſagreement ſkilfully to its advantage, and endeavours to heighten it, for the purpoſe of governing and keeping the two parties in order, by the aid of each other. The Bramins alone would form a claſs, which, by having the good opinion of both, might be troubleſome; but theſe have long forſaken their theocratical eſtabliſhment, and are ſolely intent on extending among their own members the ſciences, which they have inceſſantly cultivated, and the virtues by which they are diſtinguiſhed.

England thus rules the country without oppoſition: but were the Indians and Moors to unite in a ſingle point only, that of averſion to foreigners, her power would ſoon be at an end. Reduced in that caſe to a dependence on her European forces, the conteſt ſhe would have to ſuſtain would be too unequal for any alternative to be expected, but that of

defeat and ſubmiſſion. Such a cataſtrophe can never be brought about but by a hoſtile nation, poſſeſſing the neceſſary policy to plan the deſign, the patience and means to forward it in ſecrecy, and the power at the exploſion to ſecond and ſupport it; and even that nation muſt entertain no hope of advantage to itſelf, ſince, being equally foreign, it would probably be included in the very proſcription which it had contributed to foment.

If ſuch a revolution, however, be practicable, the preſent government is at leaſt doing every thing in its power to deſtroy the germ of it, by procuring a population of Engliſh origin, and thus diminiſh the poſſibility by augmenting its ſtrength. Madras and Bombay command the whole of the peninſula, and the death of Tippoo has lately relieved the Engliſh from the only adequate check upon their influence. The king of Trevancour and the nizam of Golconda, in complete ſubmiſſion to their will, guarantee their authority from Cape Comorin to the frontier of the ſtate of the Mahrattas, a nation that has always been their faithful ally, and aſſiſted them with its arms. Fort William puts the whole province of Bengal at their diſpoſal; and the nabob of the adjoining provinces, Mouxoudabad, Benares, and Lucknow, bow to the ſceptre of the merchants of London. The troops of theſe princes are commanded by Engliſh officers, which inſures their fidelity to the company; and the Mogul emperor has even offered his arms for the chains with which he will ſoon be loaded. Already an Engliſh detachment is ſtationed at Delhi, where it reſides with its officer in the very palace of the emperor, and keeps guard over his perſon, pretending to do ſo for his ſafety, and to ſerve him as a guard of honour; while in fact it is a guard of ſpies, placed there to watch all his actions, to give an account of them,

and eventually it will not fail to reduce him to the ſame ſtate of inſignificance to which the other princes, his vaſſals, who have ſubmitted to the aſcendancy of European power, are ſubjected.

The Engliſh company has ſovereign authority, and holds in its hands the reins of government. It nominates to all offices, impoſes taxes, receives tributes, declares war and makes peace in its own name, and keeps up a land and ſea force diſtinct from that of the king. Its navy conſiſts of a couple of frigates, and two or three ſloops, which are ſtationed at Bombay. The company has beſides two or three merchant ſhips, which regularly make voyages to Europe like thoſe which it freights; for the ſhips in general which the company employs in its trade do not belong to it, but are hired of private individuals. There is no privilege or exemption in this buſineſs, every one who has ſhips fit for the purpoſe being at liberty to offer them. Thoſe which are taken up for a ſingle voyage only are called extra-ſhips, to diſtinguiſh them from ſuch as are conſtantly employed, and which are called regular bottoms. Theſe veſſels are commanded by captains who take an oath of fidelity to the company, and who wear a blue uniform, with black velvet facings, embroidered with gold. A command of this nature is very expenſive; to obtain it, as to a regular ſhip, three things are neceſſary; the conſent of the company, that of the owner of the ſhip, and the reſignation of the individual who had the previous command. The firſt two require only a compliance with the eſtabliſhed forms, but the laſt is an affair of purchaſe. A captain is not removeable: to caſhier him he muſt have committted ſome fault, and have been brought regularly to trial; and even then the accuſtomed price muſt be paid him by his ſucceſſor, which is generally about three

thouſand pounds. When a ſhip becomes old and unfit for ſervice, the captain obliges the owners to build him a new one immediately, that he may be freighted in his turn. The ſame is done when a veſſel is wrecked or taken by an enemy.

Theſe ſhips are all built on nearly ſimilar models, and ſhould be pierced to carry at leaſt ſix-and-twenty twelve-pounders on the gun-deck. Many are ſtronger, and in caſe of neceſſity can act offenſively, and ſerve as frigates in the Indian ſeas; but their guns are too low to be of the ſame uſe in wider oceans. When the govenor-general wants them for any extraordinary ſervice, he freights them for the time neceſſary; this is a diſtinct buſineſs, and is paid for ſeparately from their common voyage.

Theſe reſources not being ſufficient, they are augmented by ſome land and ſea forces of the king of England. A part of the royal navy is always ſtationed in India, that of the company ſerving only for the narrow ſeas and againſt the pirates of the coaſt of Malabar. Five or ſix regiments of the royal troops are in like manner kept in the different ſetlements: theſe add to the number of European forces in the pay of the company; for the king's troops in their ſervice receive from them the ſame pay as their own. Beſides this garriſon, the king maintains a right of ſovereignty over the territory of the company. The perſons who reſide there are amenable, as Engliſh ſubjects, to the tribunals of his majeſty, and juſtice is adminiſtered in his name. All other acts of ſovereignty are in the hands of the governor-general, aſſiſted by his council; and it is from this ſupreme court that all orders relative to operations of government emanate. The orders from Europe, in every thing that belongs to commercial affairs, proceed from the court of directors; but points touching the ſovereign government are

under the direction of a board of control, the president of which is one of the king's ministers; so that by means of this board, his troops, and the local administration of justice, the king is the true sovereign of India. The united company of merchants trading thither have only the title to flatter their vanity; the essence of the authority resides in his majesty, who allows them to dispose of their funds as they think proper, under certain restrictions however; for the opulence of this company affecting the public credit of the nation, it is necessary that its financial concerns should be subject to examination.

The government of Bengal either farms out its taxes, or puts them into some other train of management, as it thinks proper. They are collected in its name, and it appoints the judges for the interior parts of the country; a measure which is extremely obnoxious to the natives, who are thereby compelled to have recourse to foreigners for justice. In this department the greatest difficulty is to decide with equity between a European and an Indian, when the laws of the two nations differ. Each party professes himself ignorant of the laws of the other, and the judge is sure to give offence to one of them, who complains accordingly, and excites a clamour against him.

In publishing my Voyage in the Indian Ocean and to Bengal, I have been desirous of exhibiting a picture of the true state of the Europeans in that part of the world, rather than of writing a course of botany, ornithology, or mineralogy. My intention was to furnish materials for historians, not for naturalists; I shall therefore give no nomenclature either of animals, birds, or the productions of the country; on those subjects there are already writers enough. I shall merely observe with regard to

animals, that there are two ſorts of oxen in India, the large and the ſmall. The former reſemble thoſe in Europe; but there is another ſort lower in ſtature, and which bear the ſame proportion to oxen in general, as the ſmall Hungarian horſes do to the large Engliſh ones. Among this ſmall kind there are ſome in particular that are accounted ſacred, and are called Bramin-oxen. I know not whether they are indebted for their form to the particular care that is taken of them, to a more delicate food, or to the eaſy life which they lead; but they have by no means the heavy ſluggiſh air that characteriſes other animals of their ſpecies. On the contrary, they are light, ſlender, active, and have ſomething graceful both in their ſhape and motions. They are a ſort of *apis*, and are ſuffered to go at large among the people in the ſtreets and market-places, and to take freely whatever they like. Any perſon in the bazar, from whom one of theſe oxen ſhall take a cabbage or other vegetable, will conſider it as an inſtance of extraordinary good fortune, and all his family will rejoice with him at the event.

The ſheep are in every reſpect like thoſe in France, and do not at all reſemble the African breed, which is a ſpecies that I have no where elſe met with in any part of the world.

Elephants are common all over this province, and are trained to every ſort of employment, even to hunting the tiger. It is cuſtomary to faſten on the back of this huge animal a pavilion, large enough to hold five or ſix perſons, who aſcend to it by a ladder, which is afterwards ſuſpended to the crupper.

When a tiger is to be hunted, the perſons who engage in the amuſement get into this pavilion, and have ſeveral well-trained dogs that beat the

country before them. The elephant follows the dogs till he gets ſcent of the tiger, which he does generally at a great diſtance, for his ſenſes are extremely acute. Immediately he raiſes his trunk into the air like the maſt of a ſhip, and ſeems anxious to keep it from being laid hold of by his enemy. On this ſignal the hunters prepare to fire, if it ſhould be neceſſary.

The dogs in the mean time preſs upon the tiger, who no ſooner perceives the elephant than he ſtands immovable, his mouth open and claws extended, roaring dreadfully, and watching every motion of the elephant with the greateſt attention. The latter approaches within the length of his trunk, which he ſtill keeps erect and out of danger: the two animals for a moment look at each other, and this is the time when the hunters uſually fire. The ſhot makes the tiger ſtart, on which the elephant ſeizes him, and dextrouſly lifting him up with his trunk, and letting him fall again, cruſhes him to death by treading upon him, and forces his entrails through the wounds. Whenever a tiger makes his appearance near any place that is inhabited, he is hunted in this manner; and the amuſement is attended with ſo little danger, that ladies are often of the party.

There are many ſpecies of monkeys at Bengal, but no orang-outang.

Among the birds of this province are the vulture and the eagle. This laſt is the ſmall or ſpeckled eagle, but the vulture is the large ſort. There is alſo a great variety of paroquets, and one ſpecies in particular that is difficult to be kept; a circumſtance to be lamented from the extraordinary beauty of its plumage. Its head is ſuperb, being ſhaded with roſe colour, gold, and azure; the beak too is of roſe colour, and the reſt of the body

green*. There is alſo a charming little bird called bengali, with grey and red plumage mixed with white ſpots; and a large grey ſparrow that can dive into the water and fetch its prey from the bottom, if the depth be not more than a foot: this is the more extraordinary, as nature does not appear to have deſtined this bird to ſwim, for it is not web-footed, and its feathers readily imbibe water.

The productions of Bengal, taken generally, may be claſſed under two heads, thoſe of the ſoil and thoſe of induſtry.

In the number of the former is ſaltpetre, with which the land of this country is ſtrongly impregnated. This does not require repeated waſhing to yield any quantity; a ſingle operation is ſufficient to obtain as much as the Indians want. Their lazineſs could not endure the frequent repetitions of that proceſs which are neceſſary in Europe. Cotton is another production of the ſoil, from which thoſe fine muſlins are made which are brought to Europe.

Wheat is very ſparingly cultivated here, but the country abounds in rice, which conſtitutes the principal nouriſhment of the people: the ground is uncommonly fruitful; there is no ſuch thing known as a bad crop. As the country is low and flat, it is interſected and watered by a multitude of canals, which are ſupplied by the Ganges, and contribute greatly to the fertility of the ſoil. This river overflows in the higher countries, and leaves, like the Nile, a ſediment behind it, which the heat of the ſun modifies and renders very productive. Bengal is the granary of rice to all India.

Vegetables of every ſort thrive well, but fruit in

* The name given to this bird by Edwards is the *roſe-headed ring paroquet*. T.

general is good for nothing. With much pains ſome European fruit-trees are made to grow, but the fig is the only fruit that proſpers, and even that is ſcarce. As to the fruits of the torrid zone, the latitude of the climate is too high, and the heat too moderate, to bring them to any perfection; the anana in particular is very bad.

The Engliſh have introduced into this province a new ſpecies of agriculture, in the cultivation of the ſugar-cane. When I left Bengal in 1794, this undertaking had juſt begun to be tried, and it already afforded a fair proſpect of ſucceſs. Meſſrs. Lambert and Roſs were the firſt who engaged in the ſpeculation. I viſited their plantation, and had the pleaſure of ſeeing that their fields looked well, were in good order, and the canes promiſing, though ſmaller than thoſe of the Antilles; this diſadvantage however is compenſated by the quantity of juice they yield, which is owing to the peculiar quality of the ſoil in which they are planted. The only thing that diſſatisfied me was, that a miſplaced economy ſeemed to have preſided in the eſtabliſhment of the manufactories. The buildings were good, the coppers extenſive, and the mill well executed, but it was worked by oxen, which have neither the ſtrength nor the perſeverance of the mules in the Weſt Indies. Theſe oxen are a degenerate kind of buffalo, and it is not without great trouble they can be rendered in any degree uſeful: the buſineſs of driving and whipping them is the hardeſt employment in the whole manufactory. This mode of working a mill appears to me a very ineligible contrivance; a water-mill certainly would be much more ſimple and preferable, and the Ganges is rapid enough to afford a fall of water that would ſet any wheel in motion.

At the period of which I ſpeak, the natives were

too little acquainted with a buſineſs of this kind to be capable of conducting it, and workmen were accordingly brought from China for the purpoſe: it is to be hoped however, that the Indians will learn in time to do without theſe men, and will no longer have recourſe to foreigners, who are not to be obtained but at an expenſe that enhances the price of the ſugar, which will prove of little ultimate advantage, unleſs it can be brought in price to bear ſome proportion in Europe to that of the Weſt Indies.

In ſome provinces indigo is cultivated with conſiderable ſucceſs; but though the plants are fine, all the indigo I ſaw was of a very indifferent quality. This is owing perhaps to the manner of preparation; however, be the cauſe what it may, certainly that of the Iſle of France is greatly ſuperior. I ſaw at Calcutta the common blue indigo only, but none of the copper, or the flower, or the inflammable ſort.

Among the productions of induſtry, ought principally to be mentioned the different kinds of muſlins, ſome plain, others ſtriped, and others again worked with gold, ſilver, and cotton, of which the fineſt are made at Dacca, a town in the northern part of the province, where there are many manufactories; to theſe muſt be added the doreas and terrindams, the different ſorts of linen under the names of coſſaes, nainſooks, gurrahs, ballaſores, the chintzes of Patna, the carpets of Barampour, handkerchiefs and pieces of ſilk and of cotton.

The Engliſh have eſtabliſhed manufactories for printed linens in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, that in no long time will totally ruin thoſe manufactured by the natives of Patna, which are greatly inferior, and are beſides leſs eaſily diſpoſed of, on account of the diſtance of Patna from the capital.

At Sirampoor, a Daniſh colony, of which I ſhall ſpeak hereafter, there was an excellent manufactory of this kind, belonging to Mr. Hamilton.

The Ganges, diſpenſing fertility in its progreſs, navigable throughout, and thus affording the means of commercial intercourſe, has obtained the adoration of the inhabitants of its banks, from the innumerable benefits it continually beſtows upon them, and has been worſhipped as a divinity ſince the period when, according to tradition, madam Dourga plunged into it and diſappeared. They relate, that this woman was their legiſlator, that in her old age ſhe deſcended to the bottom of the Ganges, and that ſhe ſtill lives there. Accordingly the greateſt happineſs of life is that of bathing in this river and drinking its waters, which have the virtue of purifying both body and ſoul.

Amidſt the abſurdities of this ſtory, the wiſdom of the legiſlator may be clearly perceived, who intended by the invention to enforce upon the natives the practice of frequent bathing, ſo neceſſary in a climate like this, to prevent cutaneous diſorders and the various evils reſulting from uncleanlineſs. It is in the ſame ſpirit that they are enjoined by a precept to abſtain from animal food, and to live wholly upon vegetable diet; a precaution equally uſeful for the prevention of thoſe putrid diſorders, which would otherwiſe be inevitable, from the noiſome vapours that prevail in a country almoſt wholly under water during a part of the year.

The ſtory of madam Dourga has given riſe to a ſuperſtition, to which many a poor creature has fallen a victim. It is believed that every one who is drowned in the Ganges is deſtined to enjoy with this fair perſonage eternal happineſs, and that it is by her contrivance and interpoſition that accidents of this kind happen. When a man therefore is in

danger of drowning, inſtead of endeavouring to extricate him, the byeſtanders wiſh him every kind of pleaſure, recommend themſelves to his favour, and even, if neceſſary, forward the cataſtrophe, or at leaſt are afraid of incurring the diſpleaſure of their fair divinity by aſſiſting him to get into a boat or reach the ſhore.

It is ſeldom, however, that they have occaſion to carry ſo far their inhuman zeal towards any of their countrymen; for a native, who ſhould fall into the water, perſuading himſelf that he is going to the abode of eternal felicity, has no deſire to eſcape from it by any exertions to ſave his life. It ſometimes happens, that, in ſpite of themſelves, the tide will drift them aſhore; in this caſe they ſuppoſe the ſoul not deemed by madam Dourga ſufficiently pure to be admitted into her preſence. The Europeans, however, who are little ambitious of the honour of viſiting this lady, when by accident they fall into the river, endeavour to ſave themſelves; and it is well they do, for the natives, exerting all their ſpeed, fly inſtantly from the ſpot; and if the unfortunate being is unable to ſwim, it is all over with him; he can expect no aſſiſtance unleſs one of his countrymen ſhould chance to be at hand.

The Indians bathe at leaſt once a day, as the precept commands them. I have paſſed whole days in looking at them; men, women, and children bathe together without the ſmalleſt indecency. They leave their ſhoes on the bank, and ſprinkle themſelves as they go into the river; when they are up to the middle in water, they take off their apron *(pagne)* and waſh it, perform the ablutions directed by their religion, put on their apron again, and come out. Often ſome Bramins come to bathe, bringing with them a ſmall braſs veſſel of the ſhape of a cenſer, in which are ſome grains about the ſize

of a pea: these they throw one at a time into the river, uttering, in a low tone of voice, a prayer or two. They then sprinkle themselves slightly on the back, touch their temples with the first joint of their thumb, wash their apron, and retire. It is to be remarked that the ceremony of washing the apron is observed by every individual; a proof that the precept was given for the purpose of cleanliness.

As to the ceremonies of the Bramins, such as throwing the grain into the river, the practice of enchantment to prevent the tigers from destroying the natives, the worship of madam Dourga, and other absurdities, these are points which we must not too hastily condemn. They are seemingly necessary to maintain among the people the prevailing superstition, while the more learned of the Bramins are superior to such mummery, and arrive, both in morals and mathematics, to the highest attainments. Besides, where is the religion that does not include some form, purposely contrived to impose on the multitude? Even we, who are happily instructed in the purest of all *, have we not our holy water, which is consecrated by breathing upon it and throwing in salt? Yet would it not be unjust to form an opinion of the religion itself from this instance of its practice? This, however, is the side on which it is attacked by those who would destroy it; and perhaps the natives of Bengal, at some future time, might employ the same means to overturn theirs, by ridiculing its forms, without attending to its substance, were not instruction wholly confined to the cast of the Bramins, and the rest of the nation in such deplorable ignorance as to be incapable of reflecting upon the reasonableness or absurdity of what they are directed to believe.

* The author being a Frenchman, was consequently a catholic. T.

It frequently happens, that the aged, when at the point of death, cauſe themſelves to be brought to the edge of the river at the time of low water, and, being covered over with the mud by their friends, are left in this ſtate to be overwhelmed by the tide when it returns, to the great edification of the people, who are perſuaded, that they are about to be received into the manſions of the bleſſed.

Beſides the ceremony of bathing, the Indians pay a regular worſhip to the Ganges. They make offerings to it of oil, cocoa, and flowers, which they expoſe on its banks, to be waſhed away by the ſtream. When they have a friend at ſea, and would offer vows for his return, they light in the evening ſome ſmall lamps, filled with oil of cocoa, and placing them in earthen diſhes, which they adorn with garlands, they commit them in the ſame manner to the ſtream: the river is ſometimes covered with theſe lights. If the diſh ſinks ſpeedily, it is a bad omen for the object of their vows; but they abandon themſelves to the moſt pleaſing hopes, if they can obſerve their lamp ſhining at a diſtance, and if it goes ſo far as to be at length out of ſight without any accident happening to extinguiſh it, it is a ſure token, that their friend will return in ſafety.

This madam Dourga, who has deified the Ganges, is held in great veneration: her feſtival is celebrated every year in the month of October, and while it laſts nothing is known but rejoicing; the natives viſit each other, and on three ſucceſſive evenings aſſemble together for the adoration of their divinity. Her ſtatue is placed in a ſmall niche of clay, which is gilt and adorned with flowers, pieces of tinſel, and other ſimilar ornaments. The ſtatue itſelf is dreſſed in the moſt magnificent attire they can procure, is about a foot high, and the niche

with its appendages about three feet and half. All the rich celebrate a feſtival of this kind in their own houſes, and are ambitious of diſplaying the greateſt luxury, lighting up their apartments in the moſt ſplendid manner. Such as cannot afford to obſerve this ſolemnity at their own houſe, go to that of ſome neighbour: there is one of theſe celebrations at leaſt in every quarter of the town, ſo that all the inhabitants have an opportunity of paying their devotions.

The room is furniſhed with ſeats for the gueſts, and the ſtatue is placed on a ſmall ſtage concealed by a curtain, as in our public theatres. The curtain being drawn up by the ſervants, a concert begins, in which the principal inſtrument is a ſort of bag-pipe. The reed of this not being flexible, and the performer being wholly ignorant how to modulate its tone, nothing can be leſs muſical than the ſound it produces, unleſs it be the tunes that are played upon it: the moſt vile and diſcordant clarionet is melody itſelf compared with this inſtrument, which would literally ſplit the ears of any other audience. In the midſt of this concert the pantomime is introduced, in which the perſonages of the ſcene, uncouthly dreſſed, and inſupportably diſguſting, from the rancid odour of the oil of cocoa, exhibit ſome ridiculous tricks, calculated to amuſe the honeſt Indians, who laugh heartily and give themſelves up to the moſt extravagant joy. For two days every kind of reſpect and adoration is paid to the idol; but on the third appearances alter. They abuſe it, call it a whore, ſhow their poſteriors to it, and load it with curſes and execrations: this done, they take it upon their ſhoulders and carry it to the banks of the Ganges, followed by the horrid din of the bag-pipe, where, reiterating their curſes, they throw it

into the water, amidſt the moſt frightful cries and howling, and leave it to its fate *.

It is not eaſy to diſcover the drift of this ceremony. The Bramin, who was my ſircar, told me, that the feſtival of madam Dourga was inſtituted to perpetuate and honour her memory, retain the people in a devotion, which had for its object to give a character of ſacredneſs to the Ganges, and thus enforce the precept, which enjoined the ſalutary practices of frequent ablution and bathing: but this lady not being the ſupreme deity, it was not amiſs, he added, to conclude the ceremony with acts of inſult, which would convince the people, that Brama alone was entitled to the unmixed and never-ceaſing adoration of mankind. This explanation, though by no means ſatisfactory, was all the light I could obtain on ſo ſingular a practice. This is the only worſhip I ever knew that paſſed in its ceremonies from adoration to contempt and inſult.

The Moors celebrate alſo an annual feſtival, which they call *Jamſey*. I did not obtain any accurate information as to the nature of this ceremony, but it appeared to me to be of the mournful kind. A ſort of funeral exhibition is carried through the ſtreets, accompanied with banners reſembling ſtandards. There was a great concourſe of people, and every individual had a ſtick in his hand, with a ſmall flag at the end of it. They walked in ranks on the different ſides of the ſtreet with great regularity. In the middle of the proceſſion were ſome who performed feats of ſtrength, and ſhowed their activity by the moſt hazardous leaps, bawling out all the time as loud as they were able. As neither the period of this feſtival, nor that of madam Dourga, is

* There are further details of this feſtival in Stavorinus, of which ſome are ſo humiliating to man, as to ſtartle our belief. See his Voyages, tranſlated by S. H. Wilcocke, Vol. I. page 418. T.

determined by aſtronomical returns, they vary, and ſometimes happen together: in that caſe, the government is obliged to uſe the utmoſt vigilance and precaution, to prevent the moſt ſerious accidents. Whenever the proceſſions meet, neither of them will give way to the other, and the ancient enmity of the two caſts revives in all its rancour: the parties attack each other like furies; the remembrance of the ancient victories of the Mahometans rouſes a courage and inſpires a confidence on one ſide, which on the part of the Indians are equally ſupplied by enthuſiaſm, and they both fight with the moſt inveterate malice. Jamſey and madam Dourga are broken to pieces in the confuſion, while their followers murder one another on their remains, and the battle is only terminated by the deſtruction or rout of one of the parties. A ſpirit of revenge produces a repetition of theſe battles on the following days, and it is impoſſible to foreſee the length to which the maſſacres will extend, if the government does not poſſeſs an armed force ſufficient to reſtrain the combatants.

The inhuman cuſtom of women burning themſelves to death on the corpſe of their huſbands is not yet annihilated in India; but it is confined to the caſt of the Bramins. When an individual of this caſt dies, one of his wives is bound to exhibit this dreadful proof of her affection. This lamentable ſacrifice is not impoſed upon them by law, for they may refuſe to make it; but in that caſe they loſe their character, are held in diſhonour, and are deprived of their caſt, a misfortune ſo intolerable, that they prefer to it the alternative of being burnt alive. Nature however revolts in ſome of theſe widows, and it is probable, if left to themſelves, that they would never conſent to ſo cruel a ſacrifice; but the old women and prieſts are inceſſantly impor-

tuning them, and repreſenting, that after death the moſt exquiſite happineſs is their lot: as they are commonly young, it is no difficult matter to triumph over their weakneſs and irreſolution; they accordingly ſubmit to the cuſtom, and the prejudice which ordains it keeps its ground.

The manner in which this ſacrifice is performed is different in different places. As practiſed at Bengal it is horrible. The funeral pile of the huſband is erected near a wall, with juſt ſpace enough between for a ſingle perſon to paſs, that the widow may walk, as is the cuſtom, three times round it. A hole is made in the wall at the height of the pile, in which a beam, upwards of twenty feet long is placed, with a rope faſtened to the end of it, and hanging to the ground, for the purpoſe of making it oſculate.

When the widow has performed her ambulations, and taken off her jewels, which ſhe diſtributes among her companions, ſhe aſcends the pile, and lies down, embracing the corpſe of her huſband. The beam is then put into motion, and falls upon her ſo heavily as to break her loins, or deprive her at leaſt of the power of moving. the pile is now ſet on fire, and the muſic ſtriking up, contributes, with the ſhouts of the people, to drown the noiſe of her groans, and ſhe is thus, in the full ſenſe of the expreſſion, burnt alive.

My ſervant, a very brave fellow, who had been diſcharged from the military ſervice for the loſs of a finger, and who diſliked the Bramins, informed me one day, that a woman was going to be burnt at a place which he pointed out to me, on the left ſide of the river, between Fulta and Mayapour. Having enquired into the circumſtance, I learned, that ſhe was both young and handſome, that ſhe had already twice put off the ceremony, but that the day

being a third time fixed, nothing could longer defer it. I conceived, that a woman who had twice hesitated, would find at least no great pleasure in submitting, and conjecturing, that she might not be sorry to escape altogether, I formed the resolution of endeavouring to save her. I asked my man if he would assist me, which he readily agreed to, adding, that he had told it me with the hope of engaging me in the enterprise. He requested that one of his comrades might be of the party, who was a bold fellow and would be of great use to me; I commended his zeal, and accepted the proffered services of his friend.

I took with me twenty good European sailors, whom I put on board my sloop, in the bow of which I mounted a swivel: I provided also a dozen musquets, eight pistols, and a score of sabres. Two officers accompanied me, who were resolved to aid me to the utmost of their power. I encouraged the sailors by promising them the sixth part of the value of whatever jewels the woman should have about her, intending to leave the remainder for herself, if she did not choose to stay with me. My servant and his companion were without arms, as it was not my intention to employ them in fighting. I disposed my forces into three bodies, in the following manner. One of the officers and eight men were to guard the boat. The other officer and six men were to follow me at a short distance with pistols, but to reserve their fire till I gave orders. Six of the most resolute I selected to attend me in the business; four of them armed with musquets, and two, who were to keep themselves close at my side, with pistols. The party who were left to guard the boat had musquets, and were to be in readiness to cover my retreat: besides his fire arms, every man had a sabre, and no one was to fire without express leave.

Such was the arrangement of my force, and I had no doubt from the valour of my people, that my intentions would be admirably ſeconded. They had all ſeen ſome ſervice, and would bravely ſtand before a veteran and experienced enemy, much more before men like the natives of this country. It was planned by my ſervant and his companion, that I ſhould go up to the widow and touch her: this was a violation that would deprive her of her caſt, and ſhe would then have no right to burn herſelf: at the ſame time they were to tell her in the Mooriſh language, not to be frightened, but reſign herſelf wholly to their direction, for that they came to reſcue her. They were then to carry her off as expeditiouſly as poſſible, under the eſcort of the officer and party following me, while I and my ſix choſen ſailors were to bear the brunt of the conteſt, that they might have time to reach the boat, to which I was to retreat when I ſuppoſed them ſafely arrived there.

I hoped, that men, unarmed and thus taken by ſurpriſe, ſeeing a body of Europeans with ſabres and piſtols, would not have the courage to attack us; but, being prepared to receive them if they did, I reſolved to run the riſk.

My intention was to leave the woman afterwards to her own diſpoſal, that is to ſay, to give her the choice of either going with me, or of ſettling at Calcutta upon the produce of her jewels, which I ſhould of courſe have the precaution to bring away with her.

My whole plan was prepared and ready, and I ſet out to execute it. I arrived at the place, and alertly jumped aſhore. The arrangements agreed upon were made with preciſion. I advanced, and was aſtoniſhed at the ſtillneſs and ſilence that prevailed. I came to the ſpot. Alas! the dreadful

ſacrifice had been completed the preceding evening. I had been miſinformed of the day. The wall was ſtill warm, and the aſhes were ſmoking. I returned with an oppreſſion of heart that I can hardly expreſs, and as much affected as if I had been a witneſs to the barbarous execution. My regret for this woman was as great as the pleaſure I ſhould have felt in ſaving her, and the idea I had formed of her youth and beauty.

It is to be wiſhed, for the progreſs of our knowledge in the hiſtory of the globe, that the books of the Bramins, ſince it appears that we know ſomething of them, would inſtruct us as to the time when theſe people firſt made their appearance in Bengal; a province which at that period muſt have been one vaſt marſh, and which without doubt they drained by digging the Ganges, and other great canals, that ſerve to draw off the water, which would otherwiſe cover the whole face of the country. Such an epoch, if it could be aſcertained, together with the little elevation of the ſoil in this province, would form a baſis from which inferences might be drawn relative to the retreat of the ocean.

Till theſe lights ſhall be afforded us, we muſt ſuppoſe the province of Bengal to be of no remote antiquity. It is a vaſt plain, without a ſingle mountain of granite; the little hills which are met with are merely hardened clay; and, except towards the northern extremity, not a ſtone, even of a calcareous deſcription, is to be found.

If we were aſſured by tradition, that the race of the Bramins are the true aborigines of the country, and that it has been inhabited from periods more remote than our chronology can trace, this fact would overthrow the ſyſtem, not of the abſolute retreat of the ſea, but of its gradual and progreſſive retreat; for there are proofs ſo ſtrong on the moſt

elevated parts of the globe of ſuch elevations having been formerly covered by the water, that it is impoſſible to reſiſt their evidence. Accordingly Bengal, at ſome period or other, muſt have been in the ſame ſituation. This being admitted, the principles of hydroſtatics will make it impoſſible to ſuppoſe this province to have been cleared of its waters prior to places of a more elevated poſition. If we conſider its trifling height, when compared with the Alps, the Pyrenees, the Gauts, and laſtly the mountains of Thibet, which ſeem to riſe proudly above it, we muſt ſuppoſe it to be a country in its infancy. The coaſt of Bengal is ſo low, that it cannot be ſeen at the diſtance of three leagues; a heavy ſea would overflow it; and when the tide is unuſually high, at the ſizygies, the banks of the Ganges are under water. If I may offer the reſult of my own obſervations, Bengal is of the ſame age as the plain of India, which extends from the coaſt as far as the Gauts, or perhaps a little more modern. This land is all on nearly the ſame level, and muſt conſequently have been left by the ocean at nearly the ſame period.

If mountains of granite be the primitive matter which conſtituted our planet when it firſt began to contract its ſolidity, we may ſay with Pallas, whereever we meet with it: "this is one of the points moſt diſtant from the centre of the earth, for it is compoſed of a ſubſtance, which, formerly expanſive in its fluid ſtate, was projected by a centrifugal power." This ſubſtance therefore muſt be the moſt ancient of thoſe which enter in its preſent ſtate into the compoſition of the conſolidated globe; ſince, at the period of the conflagration, it was the firſt that, condenſing itſelf, yielded to the expanſive force, which threw it from the centre to the ſurface. When I find myſelf therefore on a portion

of the globe that has none of theſe appearances, I muſt conclude myſelf to be on a land of modern formation. If we deſcend from the ſummit of theſe mountains of granite or primitive matter to the plain of Bengal, which is ſcarcely above the level of the ocean, is ſubject to inundations, and does not afford a ſingle ſpecimen of any of the original ſubſtances of the globe, even thoſe of a calcareous nature, which are evidently produced in the boſom of the ſea, we ſhall be obliged to admit, that this low plain is nothing but the ſands which the ſea has quitted, and muſt be a country of very late date, when conſidered in relation to the paſt exiſtence of the globe.

Indeed no part of this country bears any genuine ſtamp of antiquity. I do not call ſuch the monuments of human conſtruction, which are ſwept away in the lapſe of ages : I refer to characters imprinted upon thoſe vaſt maſſes, raiſed by nature alone, and which the influence of time is inſenſibly changing. But where are we to look for veſtiges like theſe in a plain, as yet ſcarcely ſolid, and that can in no part be dug without meeting the water, which lately covered, and has but juſt left its ſurface ? The extraordinary fertility of this country evinces it to be of modern formation, and the retreat of the ocean is marked by irrefragable proofs. The Clive-iſlands have evidently been formed by the ſea ; the ſand-banks called *Braſſes* experience a ſlow but regular conformation, and will hereafter be converted into iſlands, when the Clive-iſlands will be joined to the continent. The bank called *Seareef* is a new bank, which the ſea is adding to the others. Even the Ganges diminiſhes in depth ; a circumſtance that is not produced by the elevation of its bottom, for the violence of the current effectually prevents it, but by the water re-

tiring to a lower level. When the French company was firſt eſtabliſhed in this country, ſhips of war of ſeventy-four guns came to Chandernagore; but afterwards they were obliged to ſtop at Mayapour, and at preſent can reach no further than Cadjery, a ſmall village at the mouth of the river.

The concluſion I would draw from theſe arguments is, that the Bramins are not ſprung from Bengal, but have an origin much more ancient than the exiſtence of that country. An old oral tradition affirms them to have come from the north: this tradition is accompanied with no proof, and corroborated by no authority, but is a preſumption, notwithſtanding, that gives weight to my conjecture.

It has been ſuppoſed, that the Ezourvedam, of which we have a tranſlation, was compoſed a ſhort time prior to the conqueſts of Alexander. I dare affirm, that this book was never written at Bengal; and ſhould be bold enough, but for the reſpect I bear to his memory, to doubt the aſſertions of a celebrated author*, who has ſaid, that it was in the neighbourhood of the Ganges that mankind firſt aſſembled in ſociety. He ſcruples not to allege as a proof of it, the extraordinary fertility of the country, which he ſuppoſes might determine its firſt inhabitants to ſettle there. But if its fertility in the early ages of the world had been ſo great, it is certain that it would long ſince have been exhauſted, and the whole country at preſent be as deſtitute as the mountains, which were in like manner fertile heretofore, and ſerved for the ſubſiſtence of the firſt race of men whom the ocean confined to their ſummits, that are now barren and naked.

The ſituation of Calcutta is ſuch, that thoſe who are in poſſeſſion of it are maſters of the whole river, to the prejudice of the other nations of Europe,

* Voltaire: *Eſſai ſur les Moeurs, &c.*

whoſe ſettlements are all higher up in its courſe. Accordingly, were France to augment her military works at Chandernagore, ſo as even to render that fortreſs impregnable, ſhe would find herſelf notwithſtanding, from the firſt moment of hoſtilities, completely cut off from communication with the ſea by the guns of Fort William, the fire of which croſſes the river and commands the paſſage. As Chandernagore would thus be deprived of every kind of ſuccour, it muſt fall, if its garriſon were only able to act within the walls.

A little above Calcutta, on the ſame ſide of the river, is a ſmall town called Bernagore, which belonged formerly to the Dutch, but was exchanged in the year 1790, and now forms a part of the Engliſh territory. It is celebrated only in the annals of debauchery.

From this place the European eſtabliſhments upwards are on the left bank of the river. The firſt is Sirampour, or Fredericnagore, a handſome Daniſh colony, ſituated on a healthy ſpot of ground, and which wants only a greater ſhare of commerce and opulence to render it a very agreeable reſidence. The inhabitants are fond of pleaſure, and the governor, lieutenant colonel Obie, with whom I was acquainted, attracted to the town, by the politeneſs of his behaviour, and the entertainments he gave, a great many ſtrangers. One of his daughters, who was married to count Shafaleſki, gave an air of gaiety to the place: her aſſemblies were crowded; all deſcriptions of foreigners were admitted to them; there was dancing, and no one ſought amuſement in vain.

This little town is merely a factory, ſubject to the council of Trinquebar: it furniſhes a few bales of goods to a couple of veſſels belonging to the Daniſh company, which come for them annually. It ſupplies alſo one or two private veſſels, which the

privilege of the company does not exclude from this market. The commerce of the place is conſequently very confined. Sirampour is almoſt wholly inhabited by emigrants from the other eſtabliſhments, who fly thither as to an aſylum under their misfortunes. The ſettlement belongs to the king, who keeps there a company of Sepoys, as a ſort of police. There is nothing worthy of attention in the town except the houſe of the governor. It is ſtriking however by its elevation above the river, which renders it pleaſant and healthy, and it has every where a clean and prepoſſeſſing appearance.

Oppoſite to this town, on the other bank of the river, the Engliſh company has a camp of ten thouſand men, that furniſhes Fort William with its garriſon, which is relieved every month.

Proceeding upwards, we find on the ſame bank the palace of Garati, a ſolitary remnant of ancient French grandeur, and which ſhows the ſcale on which the original plans of that people in Aſia were projected. It is the fineſt building in India. The front towards the garden is in the taſte which the Europeans have adopted in this part of the world, being ornamented with a periſtyle of the Ionic order, after the Grecian manner. The inſide of the palace is ſplendid, the hall ſpacious, and the ceiling and cornice are painted by the hand of a maſter. The front towards the court is entirely in the French taſte, with no periſtyle. It repreſents three buildings, each adorned with a pediment, in which are the cartouches for baſ-reliefs, which have not been executed. The court is circular, and in a good taſte, and the entrance is by an avenue, that opens majeſtically upon this beautiful edifice. Garati is the common reſidence of the French governor in Bengal. It has frequently fallen into the hands of the Engliſh, who have not always reſigned it

with a good grace, when the return of peace has brought back its right owners. It has always however, ſooner or later, been reſtored on ſuch occaſions to the party who were in poſſeſſion before the commencement of hoſtilities.

A little higher, on the ſame ſide, is the ſmall town of Chandernagore, the citadel of which is now only a heap of ruins. The houſes, ſome half demoliſhed, and the beſt in a ſtate of decay, the ſtreets dull and overgrown with graſs, the air of neglect which every where appears along the walls, the breaches in ſome that are mouldering away, are ſo many tokens of the decline of the French power in Bengal. Yet formerly, under the government of Dupleix, this town was flouriſhing and opulent. The French, powerful and beloved, had the credit of reſcuing the Engliſh when beſieged at Cadjery, where they had been obliged to ſhelter themſelves on eſcaping from Calcutta. Scarcely however were they thus reſtored to liberty, than, a reinforcement arriving from Europe, with intelligence at the ſame time of a declaration of war, they marched to Chandernagore, to attack the very men, who, two months before, had ſaved them from the fate of their companions, ſuffocated in the black hole at Calcutta, and to lay in ruins a citadel, of which the defenders, by a generous interference, had prevented their total expulſion from the country. The barbarian meanwhile, who put to death ſo many of their unfortunate countrymen, to whoſe memory a monument has been erected near the old fort at Calcutta, ſet them an example of true magnanimity, by letting the Engliſh fortreſs ſtand, after he had taken it, and even conſenting to reſtore it. The French on the contrary had nothing reſtored to them by the Engliſh but ruins, which their ill deſtiny has not permitted them to repair. From that period,

Chandernagore has continually languiſhed, and now offers to the eye a mere ſcene of deſolation. The town has a convent of monks, and a regular church provided with a miniſter, but they are both very poor eſtabliſhments. Previous to the French revolution, the veſſels of that nation were uſed in conſiderable numbers to anchor at this place, which gave it a degree of animation; but the appearance of the firſt ſparks of that political conflagration drove the French from the town, and their ſircars followed them: the only two houſes of any conſiderable trade which they had there eſcaped, one to Calcutta, and the other to Sirampour. The agent of the French company, abandoning the whole of his ſtores, alſo took refuge among the Engliſh, leaving Chandernagore without commerce, without money, and without employment.

The inhabitants of this ſmall colony were ſtill numerous, conſiſting chiefly of the crews of veſſels, moſt of whom were deſerters. Such of the white inhabitants as were not diſaffected conſiſted of a dozen families, who had places under the government, and about two hundred aged ſeamen. A few revolutionary individuals contriving to enflame the minds of theſe laſt, a man, whom fortune had elevated to the ſtation of advocate to the king, diſtinguiſhed himſelf on this occaſion, and was particularly active. A ſmall colony like this could have no revolution to effect, and had only to wait for directions from the mother-country and obey them. The alterations rendered neceſſary by the new order of things might have been made without diſturbance or convulſion; but it did not ſo happen. Revolutionary proceedings were carried ſo far, that the governor, M. de M***, ſaw his authority deſpiſed, and was obliged to leave the place, and retire to Garati. The well-diſpoſed inhabitants, who were

leading families in the colony, followed him, thinking themſelves in danger amidſt two hundred madmen, led on by an individual equally artful and vehement, and whoſe leaſt threat was that of throwing into the river whoever ſhould render himſelf obnoxious to his party.

The governor, unfortunately, and the commanding-officer of the two companies of Sepoys which compoſed the garriſon, being on ill terms, did not on this occaſion act in concert. The former, in conſequence of this miſunderſtanding, not expecting to find the obedience neceſſary in a time of inſurrection, and conceiving the armed force which ſhould ſupport his authority to be at variance with him, departed, in order to provide for his own ſafety.

The officer, however, ſeeing the governor, his chief, quit the place, forgot the diſagreement that had prevailed between them, and, thinking himſelf bound to follow with the troops, retired alſo to Garati. The governor might eaſily have perceived, that by ſuch a proceeding the officer had no idea of enmity; and, accordingly, had he marched inſtantly back, attended by the two companies, he might have entered the town in all his authority, and have reſtored and maintained order, till he ſhould have received inſtructions from Europe; but inſtead of taking any vigorous ſteps of this nature, he contented himſelf with making preparations for his defence, in caſe of attack. For this purpoſe, he procured two pieces of cannon, which he planted in the avenue, and encamped his troops at the gate of the palace. Lord Cornwallis made him an offer of a ſufficient force to reduce Chandernagore; but M. de M***, in the true ſpirit of a Frenchman, declined accepting it, wiſhing to owe no obligation of this ſort to the natural enemies of his country.

He feared the Greeks even when offering preſents —*Danaos et dona ferentes.*

Two days after, the Portugueſe caſt, forming a company among themſelves, called *topas*, alſo repaired to the governor, who thus ſaw himſelf at the head of the loyal and moſt numerous part of the colony, in oppoſition to a handful of malecontents, who were beſides in inſurrection without a cauſe ; for no official intelligence had yet been received, and the governor was actually waiting for inſtructions from France. In this ſituation he refuſed to take any meaſure againſt the rebels, and remained in a ſtate of inaction in his palace.

The revolutioniſts meanwhile were not tranquil ſpectators of this conduct on the part of the governor. Their firſt attention was directed to what has been called the ſinews of war, and with this view they ſeized upon thoſe ſircars who had not had the precaution to make their eſcape, and exacted from them heavy contributions. Theſe ſums they applied to the raiſing a body of three hundred Sepoys, which they recruited from the country around. A merchant, whoſe affairs were deſperate, thinking thereby to retrieve himſelf, accepted the command : he was ſure at leaſt of ſubſiſtence for a time, and in reality this was all he obtained. A yonng officer of a trading veſſel was lieutenant under him. By plundering the company's magazines, they obtained clothing for this corps, and a quantity of Madeira wine, of which they drank a part, and ſold the reſt to furniſh their treaſury. They purchaſed ſome indifferent pieces of cannon, that had belonged to a merchant ſhip, and put themſelves into a poſture of defence. Finding that no one moleſted them, they ſuſpected ſome ſnare, to guard againſt which they threw up ſome ſmall entrenchments on the bank of the river, behind which they poſted themſelves, with

the king's magazine in their rear, fortifying the whole with their paltry artillery. They called this their camp, and at night all their party were bound to repair to it. In the morning their leader harangued them, and they were diſmiſſed till the afternoon, when they returned to their exerciſe. By the inactivity of the governor the ſtorm was ſuffered to thicken, and the ſtrength of the inſurgents gradually increaſed, till, accuſtomed to inſurrection, they at length grew ſo familiar with it, that inſtead of conſidering themſelves as criminal, the governor alone appeared ſo in their eyes. Meanwhile, five hundred men, united in an enterpriſe of ſedition, were not a body to be deſpiſed, and M. de M*** was wholly unpardonable in allowing them to remain in this ſtate of ſecurity.

Affairs were in this poſture, when intelligence arrived, that the people of Paris had gone to Verſailles for the king, and brought him to the capital, where they had determined he ſhould reſide. Upon this, the ci-devant advocate, and a ſurgeon, who had joined his party, exclaimed, that the inhabitants of the other part of the globe had ſet them an example, which it became them to follow, and that Paris and Chandernagore ſhould have but one rule of conduct. They reſolved therefore to march to Garati, and bring back the governor. This advice inflaming their minds, and ſome arrack they had drunk having mounted into their heads, it was neceſſary to ſet out immediately, to quiet the clamours of the multitude. It was in the power of M. de M***, either to reſiſt them with ſucceſs, or to ſecure himſelf by flight: he however did neither, but ſuffered himſelf to be taken, without firing a ſhot, and to be brought as a priſoner into the town, where he ought to command. On his arrival, he was ſhut up in a dungeon, with all the officers of the gar-

ſon. With reſpect to the private individuals who had accompanied him in his retreat, they eſcaped to Sirampour, where they contemplated at a diſtance the firſt ſcenes of a tragedy, which happily terminated with a cataſtrophe leſs ſanguinary than there was reaſon to apprehend.

As ſoon as lord Cornwallis was informed of theſe proceedings, he inveſted Chandernagore, and demanded that the governor ſhould be given up. The inſurgents had at leaſt the quality of courage: they accordingly appeared at the barrier of their little camp with the matches lighted; and the preſident of their committee declared to the Engliſh officer, that on the firſt ſhot fired againſt them they would put their priſoners to death and would never ſurrender while they had a man left to defend their entrenchments. The officer, who had not expected an anſwer of this kind, retired, and other means were reſorted to for the deliverance of the captives.

The trial of the governor and his companions now commenced. The whole of this proceſs was a ſtriking example of mental dereliction and paſſion. It was neceſſary at length to paſs ſentence, which was the point moſt embarraſſing of all. They would willingly have condemned the ſuppoſed culprits to death; but the French had not the power to carry a ſentence like this into execution in Bengal without the approbation of the neighbouring nabob, whom they did not wiſh to offend. Influenced by this conſideration, they determined to ſend them in chains to the iſle of France, whence it was hoped they would ſpeedily be conveyed to Europe, with a character that would conduct them at once from the veſſel to the ſcaffold. This was during the reign of Robeſpierre.

The pilot-brig, which they had in their poſſeſſion, was equipped for this expedition, and the priſoners

were put on board. This was precisely the moment lord Cornwallis waited for: he accordingly sent three armed brigs to chase the French brig, and bring it into Calcutta. The vessels at anchor in Port Diamond had also orders to intercept it in its passage.

In consequence of these measures, the governor and his companions in captivity obtained their release, and were brought in honour to the English settlements, where they remained for a considerable time. The inhabitants of Chandernagore continued in the same state of confusion: some commissioners sent from Pondicherry for the purpose of re-establishing order and tranquillity being unable to effect it, lord Cornwallis left them to the consequences of their internal dissensions, till war was declared between the two nations, when he took possession of the place and dispersed them.

About a league above Chandernagore is the little town of Chinsura, the chief of the Dutch settlements in Bengal. This place has been long condemned to inactivity, and offers nothing worthy of observation. Its exports do not exceed, at most, two cargoes a year, which are sent in boats to Fulta, where the ships stop. Here, as in all the Dutch establishments, some Malay families have settled, and given birth to a description of women called *mosses*, who are in high estimation for their beauty and talents. The race is now almost extinct, or is scattered through different parts of the country; for Chinsura, in its decline, had no longer sufficient attraction to retain them, and at present a few only, and those with great difficulty, are here and there to be found.

On the same side of the river, at some distance above this colony, is Bandel, a small Portuguese town, in a still worse condition than Chinsura, and

which would ſcarcely have preſerved even its name, but for the excellence of the cheeſe that is made there, and which is held in ſuch requeſt through the country, that it keeps up the remembrance of the town from which it is derived.

After ſtaying three months at Calcutta, I ſold my veſſel for a hundred thouſand livers, and was happy at being relieved from the uneaſineſs I had continually felt reſpecting it, and the injury it was daily ſuſtaining. I thought now of returning to the Iſle of France, when an aid-decamp of Mr. Conway arrived at Calcutta with a veſſel, which he had purchaſed on credit, and did not well know what to do with. I was nearly in the ſame predicament with regard to my money, and was deſirous of ſpeculating in the article of grain, by making a venture to the coaſt of Malabar, then afflicted by a moſt dreadful famine. With this view I hired his veſſel, which I freighted with three hundred tons of rice. A few days after I had concluded this bargain, he diſcharged the captain, and not readily meeting with another to ſuit him, he aſked me to take the command of her myſelf. "If I engage a perſon in the ordinary way," ſaid he, "he will deceive me like the one I have diſmiſſed. If I ſelect one in whom I can confide, I muſt do it at a very great expenſe, which I cannot afford. Take therefore yourſelf the command of the ſhip; you muſt go for the purpoſe of diſpoſing of your cargo, and it can make little difference whether you go as captain or paſſenger." I conſented, and began to prepare for my voyage. The firſt ſtep I took was to diſcharge all the Laſcars. The blacks in the crew of my own veſſel had tired me of this ſort of

ſailors. I compoſed my crew of different Europeans, taking great care, however, to avoid ſuch of the French as had lately arrived, for fear of diſobedience or mutiny. I was fortunate enough to collect an excellent crew of thirty men, who proved of great ſervice to me in ſituations which required reſolution and fortitude. I know not why I ſhould reaſon with myſelf againſt adopting the notion, certainly ſuperſtitious, that ſome ſhips are lucky, and others unlucky: this of mine was of the latter deſcription. We changed its name, which was Cook, to that of the United Friends, and we embarked together to realize its new appellation. From the moment I ordered a man to the capſtan, to that of my arriving at the Iſle of France, I experienced every imaginable vexation: in ſhort, this veſſel ruined me.

On the day fixed for our departure we could not weigh the anchor; it was buried ſo deep, that all our efforts were ineffectual. My friend was averſe to the idea of loſing it; but in the chapter of anchors I was more deeply read than he was. I had loſt ſeven in my former veſſel; namely five at Calcutta, one at Pondicherry, and one at the Sechelles. At laſt I prevailed on him to go aſhore and purchaſe another; and this done, I cut the cable. I proceeded down the river with a Dutch pilot, who had the reputation of being ſkilful, and who gave us a proof of it, by running us upon a ſand-bank oppoſite Fulta. We drifted with the tide, dragging an anchor, but with ſo little reſiſtance as not to loſe the power of managing the helm. The veſſel ſtriking abaft was thrown inſtantly athwart, but fortunately being flat-built, ſhe did not quite capſize, though the heel was dreadful. It was then I had reaſon to rejoice at having a crew of Europeans. The boats of the country, that were helping

us down the river, immediately rowed away, and, believing that we muſt inevitably periſh, faithful to their religion, left us to the care of madam Dourga. That fair divinity, however, probably did not conceive us ſufficiently pure to be admitted into her preſence, and we eſcaped for this time the honour of drowning.

My pilot was ſo confuſed as to be incapable of acting, and, as he ceaſed to give orders, I took upon myſelf the management of the ſhip. I began by raiſing the anchor, upon which I was afraid, when the tide ſhould return, of being drifted. I then placed an officer in every boat, with a brace of piſtols, and gave orders for the firſt man to be ſhot through the head, who endeavoured to eſcape without my permiſſion. I was preparing to ſhore up my veſſel by the help of ſome top-maſts till the coming-in of the flood, when ſhe ſwung half-round, preſenting her ſtern to the current. She was not however long in this ſituation, for the ebb being nearly run out, was prodigiouſly ſtrong. She ſoon made another half-turn, and in this inſtance came ſo ſuddenly about, that ſhe cracked dreadfully in all her timbers: I feared ſhe muſt have gone to pieces, but happily ſhe ſtill kept firm. I now felt the bottom, I thought, yield to the motion of the ſhip; a moment after ſhe ſwung round again, her ſtern to the current, and I plainly perceived that we had ſhifted our ſtation. The pilot-brig at anchor near us made a ſignal, that he was himſelf in deep water, and if I could move a little further I ſhould get into the ſtream: in ſhort, after another heel, my ſhip dragged along the bottom, and the tide placed us in the channel. We had touched, it ſeems, merely on a ſhifting ſand, which had been unable to reſiſt the force of the current, and the weight of the ſhip.

I anchored at Fulta, very apprehenſive as to the conſequences of this accident. I ſounded the well carefully, but the veſſel did not make water. Still however I could not but believe, that a ſhock ſo violent muſt have done ſome material injury, and my apprehenſions proved in the ſequel to have been well founded. I had the confidence in myſelf to undertake the voyage without inſuring my cargo; but this accident rendering me more prudent I immediately took the precaution. Being now at eaſe on this head, and finding in the courſe of ſome days, that the veſſel did not leak, I put to ſea, directing my courſe with the view of making the iſland of Ceylon, ſomewhere about the flats. I ſoon found my veſſel to be no good ſailer, and therefore kept on my guard againſt the effects of the tides. I ſet ſail in the beginning of November, when the currents are rapid between Ceylon and the coaſt of India; and knowing this, I proceeded with caution when I came within their latitude. I was obliged to keep near the land, that I might diſtinguiſh the point I was deſirous of making, while it was neceſſary to avoid going too cloſe, for fear of a gulf. In conſequence, when I ſuppoſed myſelf to have arrived near the place, I was all night on the deck, obſerving the lead, and keeping conſtantly in thirty fathom water, aware that, while this was the caſe, I could run no riſk, the ſtrait containing only from ſeven fathoms to nine.

At day-break I witneſſed a moſt extraordinary phenomenon, produced by the clouds. It was calm, the land appeared exactly on the proper point of the horizon, the hills were viſible, the plain at the foot of them, the ſhore, the trees, every thing was perfectly diſtinct. It was in vain that I referred to my ſoundings to determine our diſtance from the land; I could not refuſe the evidence of my eyes. I

ſounded however again, and found ſtill a great depth of water, though by the appearance of theſe objects it ought to be ſhallow. I was ſo ſtrongly convinced that it was the coaſt of Ceylon, that I got ready an anchor. The illuſion continued till ten o'clock, when, the wind ſpringing up, it vaniſhed, to the extreme aſtoniſhment of every one, and eſpecially of myſelf. I continued my route, making a ſmall circuit towards the flats; but the currents were ſo rapid, that in four and twenty hours I found myſelf thirty leagues to the ſouthward above my reckoning. All my endeavours to get in with the land were uſeleſs, and a ſudden ſquall from the north-eaſt aſſailing us ſo diſtreſſed my veſſel, that the effects of her accident in the Ganges began to be viſible by a ſmall leak. The ſea was extremely hollow, and from the effect of the tides very much broken. In the height of the ſquall, the mizen maſt was carried away below the cap, which obliged us to unbend the mizen top-ſail immediately. In doing this my beſt ſailor fell overboard, and was never ſeen again; the waves ran ſo high, that he was ſwallowed up inſtantly. I hoiſted out a boat, which in two minutes was ſtove againſt the ſhip's ſide, and it was by the greateſt good fortune, that the ſailors who were in it did not all periſh: inſtead of one of my crew, I had nearly loſt eight. I was compelled to leave the poor fellow to his fate, and the wreck of my boat to the waves, and be ſatisfied with regaining the ſeven, who had thus ventured their lives to ſave their comrade.

This ſquall greatly annoyed me, and rendered me very uneaſy. I could not now regain my northing, and I was afraid, that in ſpite of myſelf I ſhould be obliged to viſit the Maldive iſlands, which was contrary to my plan. After continuing, however, three days in this ſtate, the weather became moder-

ate. In the firſt part of the ſtorm I had loſt a fore-top-ſail; and as my owner, from his poverty, had furniſhed me with a very ſlender ſtock, I had none to replace it with; but the mizen top-ſail being new, and of no uſe, now that the top-maſt to which it belonged was gone, I ſubſtituted it in the place of that which I had loſt, and in this condition was fortunate enough to gain Cape Comorin: all my wiſhes were then confined to reaching Cochin, that I might repair my maſts and rigging.

In paſſing oppoſite the coaſt of Trevancoor, I ſent my boat aſhore to get information. When it returned, it brought with it the figure of an idol, reſembling a lingam or priapus, which ſome of the crew had taken out of a niche in a bank, where it was expoſed to public adoration. The deſign was but too well executed, for it was as indecent as the aſſiſtance of ſculpture could make it. I reprimanded the officer for permitting ſuch a theft, of which I could not ſee the utility; but he alleged, that it was taken without his knowledge to ſerve as a tiller to the rudder, that belonging to the boat having been loſt: in fact, they had ſteered with this phallus, the ſize of which may be eaſily conjectured from the circumſtance. I am ignorant whether the degree of veneration paid to this emblem by the Indians be in proportion to its magnitude.

In the afternoon of the next day but one, I anchored in the road of Cochin, and immediately got into a boat; but it was ſo far to the entrance of the river, that I did not arrive there till night. The cockſwain of my boat pretended to be well acquainted with the place; but, notwithſtanding his knowledge, he got me on a ſand-bank, where the waves beat ſo ſtrong, that we were twenty times on the point of overturning, or filling with water. The entrance of the river of Cochin has this incon-

venience attending it, that when the wind blows freſh it raiſes a bar, which, taking the boats unawares, often endangers, and ſometimes ſinks them. I was more than an hour ſeeking in vain for the entrance of the river; at laſt, after frequent riſks of drowning, I got from theſe waves, and had now to find a part of the coaſt where it was practicable to land; for it was too late to think of returning, in a road ſo diſtant, and with currents ſo ſtrong. I ran my boat aground, and drew it upon the beach; where leaving one of the crew to take care of it, I took the reſt with me, and made towards the town. With my uſual good fortune, I found the gate ſhut, and muſt have remained all night upon the ſands, if I had not been told, that the harbour gate ſhutting a little later, if we were very expeditious we might ſtill get in. We accordingly made all the haſte we could, and arrived preciſely in time. A paſſenger in my veſſel, who came aſhore with me, had a letter of recommendation to one of the inhabitants, which he delivered the ſame night, and was invited to take up his abode at the houſe of the perſon to whom it was addreſſed. For myſelf, I went to the inn, the maſter of which, when informed of the arrival of the paſſenger, ſent to let him know that his chamber was ready, and that a place would regularly be kept for him at table; leaving him, if he pleaſed, to reſide with his friend, but acquainting him, that he would have the ſame ſum to pay as if he lived at the inn; for that ſuch was the *privilege* of his houſe, which was farmed to him by the government. This circumſtance induced the paſſenger to reſign the accommodation offered him by his friend, and take up his abode the next day at the inn. As for me the innkeeper deſired me to give him a liſt of what I ſhould want, telling me at the ſame time, that he had provided for me a palan-

quin and ſervants. I obſerved, that having but a few days to ſtay at Cochin, and not intending to make any viſits, I thought I could very well diſpenſe with the carriage; to which he replied, that I was at liberty in this reſpect to follow my inclination, but I ſhould find it charged in his account, for it was a part of his *privilege*. I was ſurpriſed at ſo extraordinary an inſtance of monopoly; but conceiving it to be the duty of a traveller not to oppoſe the cuſtoms of the country he is viſiting, I ſubmitted.

I found the regiment of Meuron in garriſon in this town. It is a Swiſs regiment, but was raiſed in France, and is compoſed of Frenchmen, many of whom came to offer me their ſervices; and among them one in particular, who ſaid he was a butcher, and who propoſed to furniſh me with ſuch proviſions and live ſtock as I might want at my departure. From the deſire of encouraging a countryman I accepted his offer, and ordered ſeveral articles, which he promiſed me on terms more reaſonable than I could get them of any one elſe. Theſe I did not include in the liſt which I gave to the innkeeper; but the man was too well ſkilled in his trade not to perceive the deficiency, and he immediately concluded that I was ſupplied with them from ſome other quarter. He ſaid nothing, but he watched ſo narrowly, that he was ſoon informed of the affair. In conſequence, he employed his hirelings, who ſeized the whole of my purchaſes juſt as they were conveying on board. To get them out of his hands, I was obliged to pay him a duty, for this too was his *privilege*; ſo that eventually they coſt me more than if I had purchaſed them of himſelf. So extenſive a *privilege* made me cautious and I was afraid of taking almoſt a ſingle ſtep, leſt I ſhould unfortunately encounter ſome new inſtance of it.

While I ſtaid aſhore, one of my crew deſerted. Conceiving that I too had a *privilege*, that of claiming my ſailor, I ſent in purſuit of him; but here alſo I trenched upon a prerogative. I was taken before the fiſcal, who reprimanded me, and gave me to underſtand, that it was the *privilege* of the hangman to apprehend deſerters. I had no great difficulty in making him ſenſible, that, being a ſtranger in the country, and unacquainted with their cuſtoms, I was excuſable in violating them; that, beſides, I could have no idea of interfering with the functions of this grand executor of public juſtice. I was then aſked for a deſcription of my ſailor, and two hours after he was brought to me by the officer in queſtion.

Though theſe anecdotes may be thought too trifling to be inſerted in a work of a ſerious nature, they may have their utility in ſhowing how cautious we ſhould be in our behaviour, if we would ſhun, in a foreign country, all occaſions of offence.

Cochin is a Dutch ſettlement on the coaſt of Malabar, and is their ſtrongeſt ſtation on the peninſula, ſince their loſs of Negapatnam. I did not examine it ſufficiently to be able to give an accurate deſcription of it, but I ſuppoſed it to be in the form of a heptagon, the ſide next to the river included. The ramparts appeared to be extremely high, and very well fenced on the ſide of the land, and the ditch that ſurrounded them to be in a good condition. The Dutch company always kept a ſtrong garriſon there.

This town has a ſeparate government, ſo that the military commander is third only in authority. There is a civil governor, who is one of the company's officers; and under him is the fiſcal, who holds the ſecond rank, as in all the other Dutch ſettlements.

Cochin is conſtructed on a good plan, but the buildings are bad. The governor reſides in a houſe ſcarcely better than a barn, ſituated on a ſpot that has no embelliſhments, and is overgrown with graſs, as the ſtreets are likewiſe. All the houſes are proportionably mean, and an air of wretchedneſs and inactivity reigns in this colony, as in the ſettlements in general of the Dutch company in India. With a little exertion, however, Cochin might become a flouriſhing place: its commerce in the article of pepper might be rendered conſiderable, by holding out encouragements to merchants, and ſuppreſſing the vexations which foreigners experience on the part of the government. Its ſituation is admirable for the purpoſe, for it ſtands on a fine river capable of admitting very large veſſels. The water, at the flood, is never leſs than twenty feet deep, and the harbour is ſufficiently extenſive for any ſhips, however numerous, that might trade to it. A number of ſmall rivers and canals run into it, which facilitate the inland communication to a great diſtance up the country, and would give extraordinary activity to commerce. Its poſition at the extremity of the peninſula renders it eaſy of approach in all ſeaſons, and diminiſhes the danger to which navigation is expoſed by the monſoon from the ſouth-weſt: nothing but a fine day is neceſſary to enable veſſels to get out, and even to reach Cape Comarin, from which there is a paſſage to any part of India. The teak wood, ſo excellent for the conſtruction of veſſels, abounds in this place, and many ſhips are accordingly built there; it is indeed the moſt conſiderable branch of induſtry that is at preſent carried on. Theſe advantages, however, are all in a great meaſure neglected, and Cochin is in a ſtate of deplorable languor, from which it will never recover, till the Dutch company ſhall think proper to change their ſyſtem, or the town

ſhall be fortunate enough to fall into the hands of ſome other nation, that may know how to value and turn to account the reſources which it offers.

The inhabitants of this part of India are ſubject to a complaint in the legs, which is called by the names of elephantiaſis and the Cochin diſeaſe. The leg ſwells prodigiouſly, without either the thigh or the foot being affected: in this ſtate it reſembles conſiderably the leg of an elephant, and thence derives its former appellation. The diſorder is probably occaſioned by the quality of the water uſed by the inhabitants: there are perſons alſo much afflicted with goîtres.

This country produces pepper, arrack, and cotton: we find likewiſe dried fruits and cardamoms; but the laſt two articles are chiefly brought thither by the Arabs. Cowries alſo may be procured, by beſpeaking them in time; for the Maldives, where they are found, are at no great diſtance, and in the fair ſeaſon there are always boats from thence, with which we may treat for them.

The number of Europeans at Cochin, excluſively of the troops, does not exceed fifty; the Portugueſe caſt amounts to about five hundred, and the reſt of the population is Indian. Though the town is extenſive, and tolerably well filled with houſes, it has the appearance of a deſert. The temperature of the climate is the ſame as at Pondicherry, but the ſeaſons are contrary; the mountains of the Gauts forming a barrier which ſeparates ſummer and winter. The ſeaſons are not ſubject in India to the ſame variations as in Europe.

The winds, with the exception of a few irregularities, by no means frequent, blow from two parts only of the horizon; from the quarter between north-north-eaſt and eaſt-north-eaſt for ſix months, and the remainder of the year from ſouth-ſouth-weſt,

to weſt-ſouth-weſt. The paſſing of the ſun acroſs the equator determines the alteration of ſeaſon. The wind, while the ſun is in the northern hemiſphere, blows from the ſouth-weſt quarter, and *vice verſa*; the currents alſo are then reverſed, and follow the direction of the wind. Theſe ſeaſons are called monſoons. During the prevalence of the ſouth-weſt monſoon, the Gauts, intercepting the ſtorms and clouds, prevent them from paſſing to the coaſt of Coromandel, where, the weather being then beautiful, the ſeaſon called ſummer prevails. The coaſt of Malabar, on the contrary, is at that period ſubject to violent rains and ſqualls, and there they have what they call winter. The currents run in a ſoutherly direction on the coaſt of Malabar, and on the other coaſt towards the north. Six months after the winds change to the north-eaſt; and the mountains producing a ſimilar effect on the contrary ſide, ſtop the rains and ſtorms in their courſe, and detain them on the coaſt of Coromandel, and accordingly that of Malabar has ſummer in its turn. The currents then run in a ſoutherly direction on the former coaſt, and towards the north on the latter.

By means of this certainty of the ſeaſons, the moſt indifferent veſſels accompliſh their voyages without difficulty, by taking advantage of the winds and currents.

Not being able to ſell my rice to my ſatisfaction at Cochin, I was on the point of proceeding with it as far as Surat, when a captain who had come from that coaſt aſſured me, that a ſcarcity no longer prevailed there, but that grain was very much wanted in Arabia, particularly at Mocha, where the famine, he ſaid, was extreme, and I could not do better than go to that place, which would prove to me an excellent market. I have ſince found, that he told me this with a view to deceive me, and prevent me

from going to Surat, as he was himſelf purchaſing a cargo of rice to carry thither: I believed his account, however, and immediately proceeded on my voyage.

In four and twenty hours I was in ſight of the ſtraits of Babel-mandel, which I cleared at ſeven o'clock in the evening; and entering the Red Sea, I anchored the next day at Mocha, about thirteen leagues beyond the ſtraits.

From the ſtraits to Mocha, the navigation is perfectly ſafe along the coaſt, and there is good anchoring every-where: but the approach to the town is dangerous, and in entering the road care muſt be taken both to ſteer and to ſound with exactneſs. Veſſels ſhould never go nearer than thirteen fathom water, on account of the ſand-banks, and ſhould then keep to the north till the front of the town is in view, or the dome of the great moſque bearing eaſt ſouth-eaſt. They may then proceed in ſafety to the anchorage, where they will have ſix or ſeven fathoms, in a ſandy bottom. The north fort lies between north-eaſt-by-eaſt, and north-eaſt-by-north, within about half-gun ſhot of a twelve pounder. There is another channel near the ſouth fort, frequented by ſmall veſſels; but I would not recommend it, unleſs to thoſe who are thoroughly acquainted with it: a veſſel muſt moor with the beſt bower to the ſouth, on account of the ſqualls, which in that quarter are very violent. The ſea however is calm during their prevalence, being incloſed by the ſands and reefs which ſhelter the road, while the ſky, though the ſun ſhines intenſely hot, has every appearance of a hurricane.

When the monſoon is ſettled, the period of which is from the latter end of November to the beginning of June, the wind, blowing from the ſouth and ſouth-ſouth-eaſt, comes charged with all the vapours

of Abyſſinia, and brings with it even the ſand of that country. In conſequence, the atmoſphere ſeems inflamed, the ſky looks red, nothing ſcarcely is to be ſeen at the diſtance of a league; and the burning ſand carried along by the wind every-where ſcorches the vegetation. It is cuſtomary at Mocha to cultivate a great quantity of baſil plants, with which the inhabitants decorate their apartments and windows; but theſe muſt be removed at the commencement of the ſoutherly monſoon, or they would otherwiſe be killed, not only by the ſand, which would deſtroy them, but alſo by the wind the heat of which is ſometimes inſupportable. All communication with veſſels in the road is then interrupted.

A wind from the ſouth laſts generally one, and ſometimes two quadratures: but at the new and full moon it is commonly ſucceeded, for the ſpace of three days, by a northerly wind, which cools the air, and purifies the atmoſphere.

The road of Mocha is of a circular form, deſcribing an arc, of which the chord is the anchorage: the two extremities of this chord are defended by the forts I have mentioned. The ſmall veſſels of the country anchor near the ſhore, by a handſome pier, built for the convenience of loading and unloading. The ſeaſons for entering and quitting the Red Sea are determined by the change of the monſoons, which do not, as in India, depend upon the equinoxes. The laſt days of November, or the beginning of December, bring the ſoutherly monſoon; and from that period the currents ſet into the ſtraits of Babel-mandel with a prodigious rapidity, till the commencement of June, when the wind veering to the north or north-north-weſt, they run in a ſoutherly direction*. In the northerly monſoon, the

* This is confirmed by D'Apres de Manevilette. See the Neptune Oriental. This work is the reſult of the obſervations of the

veſſels coming to Mocha cannot make the road on account of the violence of the wind, and are obliged to go to a neighbouring bay to anchor, which however they can leave in the intervals in which the north wind prevails. During the whole of this monſoon, thoſe which are in the Red Sea muſt remain there, no veſſels being able to ſurmount the united force of the wind and the current.

The pilgrims going to Mecca from different parts of India take advantage of this ſeaſon. Whole ſhip-loads of theſe religioniſts often arrive, influenced, many of them, by motives of trade, intereſt, and a deſire of pillage, more than by devotion. Nothing can equal the diſorder which they occaſion in the caravanſaries and other places. The inhabitants therefore are eager to furniſh them with whatever they want, that they may ſet off for Jedda, whence they proceed to Mecca.

While I was at Mocha, an unfortunate Engliſh captain fell a victim to their wickedneſs. Several of them had miſſed their veſſel in returning, either purpoſely, or that their Mooriſh or foreign captain would carry them no further, or that the crime which they afterwards committed was a preconceived plan. They were twenty in number, and they waited on captain Nun, who commanded a veſſel of the ſort called *grab*, to aſk for a paſſage to Bengal. As he was returning to Calcutta, after a profitable voyage, he deſired nothing better than to

beſt navigators, and ſhould be taken as authority, diſregarding the reports of ſome modern travellers.

While the winds blow thus in the Red Sea, they vary in the gulf outſide the ſtraits; that is, as a general rule, they blow from the eaſt between November and June, and during the other ſix months from the weſt; ſo that from November to June the wind is eaſt in the gulf, and ſouth-ſouth-eaſt in the Red Sea: and afterwards for ſix months weſt in the gulf, and north-north-weſt in the Red Sea.

ſerve theſe men, whom he could not well ſuſpect of any evil deſign. The terms were ſoon agreed upon, and the article of proviſion was as readily adjuſted; for his crew being Laſcars, and conſequently Muſſulmans, what he had provided for them would ſerve alſo for the paſſengers. He ſailed and cleared the ſtraits; but the veſſel had no ſooner doubled Socotora, than theſe miſcreants ruſhed upon the few Europeans, five or ſix in number, who had the direction of the veſſel, and murdered them all, beginning with the captain. Some of the Laſcars, who attempted to oppoſe them, were alſo killed, while others got up into the tops, and put themſelves into a poſture of defence. A capitulation took place, and they were offered their lives, if they would come down and aſſiſt to conduct the veſſel to any port, no matter where. They agreed, and for ſome days tranquillity ſeemed to be reſtored; but as they drove about at random, and came in ſight of no land, the aſſaſſins ſuſpected ſome trick, and fell upon them again. Having had time however in this inſtance to put themſelves upon their guard, they reſiſted, and mixed their blood with that of their murderers. At laſt, after a battle in which, on both ſides, five or ſix were killed, a ſuſpenſion of arms was a ſecond time agreed upon, and the Laſcars reſumed once more the management of the veſſel. The day ſubſequent to this affair, coming in ſight of the Maldives, the pirates made an offer to the Laſcars of the boats belonging to the veſſel, in which they might get aſhore as well as they could: they accepted it, and quitted the veſſel, which ſince that period has never been heard of.

As for the Laſcars, they landed upon the firſt iſland they could make, but were ſent to another, in which reſided the king. They were treated humanely by this prince, who ordered that a paſſage

free of expenſe ſhould be given them to the coaſt of Malabar. They diſembarked at Mangalore, and had the preſence of mind to declare themſelves Laſcars belonging to the French. Accordingly the officers of Tippoo received them as friends, and they were conveyed to Mahé, whence they returned to their home. This tragical event was inſerted in the public papers, and every exertion was made to diſcover the veſſel and the pirates; but the fate of neither has ever been known.

With the exception of a few Mooriſh ſhips, and one or two from Bengal, which come every year as far as Jedda, the navigation of the Red Sea is confined to veſſels, which they call *daous*. Theſe are open boats without any kind of covering, and which a heavy wave would be ſufficient to fill and ſend to the bottom; but they are rarely expoſed to ſuch danger, from keeping almoſt always near the coaſt. Often they will make their way, even between the land and the reefs, which prevent other veſſels from approaching it, but acroſs which there are paſſes with which they are acquainted. Theſe boats are of a handſome form, and may be brought to conſiderable perfection. They carry a ſingle ſquare ſail; and though the maſt is ill proportioned, and awkwardly placed, and the ſail often formed only of ſtraw, they go through the water and perform their voyages in a very ſuperior ſtyle.

The buſineſs of the port of Mocha is performed by two large and very heavy boats, pointed at the ends, but how conſtructed I could not aſcertain; apparently they were put together like the boats in Europe; but their ſhape was ſo ſingular, that I was at a loſs what to make of them. They carry a maſt and an unwieldy ſail of ſtraw, made of pieces about two feet wide, and five or ſix long, ſewed together. By the help of this ſail, which it is diffi-

cult either to hoiſt or to manage, they perform expeditiouſly the buſineſs of the road; but every time they tack, being obliged to take it down before they ſhift it, they fall during theſe manœuvres ſo much to leeward in rough weather, that they cannot get to Mocha, and are compelled to take ſhelter in the adjoining bay, whence they come the next morning to the pier*.

Mocha is ſituated at the extremity of the dominions of the iman of Sana, in the province of Yemen, on a ſmall bay, formed by an iſland of ſand towards the ſouth, and a ridge of rocks to the north. On each of the points of land which incloſe the road, the Arabs have built a fort. Theſe forts are a wretched kind of circular redoubts, the foundations of which are maſſes of granite: the embraſures alſo are formed of large ſtones or pieces of coral: but theſe openings, though tolerably wide are ſcarcely more than two feet high. The whole is ſurmounted with a building of bricks raiſed over the artillery like a cruſt over a pie, without any inſide work, even ſo much as a beam, to give it ſo-

* The latitude of Cape Babel-mandel has been determined by a ſeries of obſervations, taken between that cape and Cape Saint Anthony, to be 12° 43′ north.—By D'Apres, it is 12° 45′.—By Bruce, 12° 39′ 20″.

Latitude of Mocha, 13° 24′.—By D'Apres, 13° 22′.—By Niebuhr, 13° 19′.

Variation north-weſt: At Mocha, 12° 45′.—By D'Apres. 13°.—By Niebuhr, 12° 40′.—At the ſtraits, 12° 54′.—By D'Apres, 12° 40′.

The tides are 12 hours.—According to Niebuhr, 11 only

The tide riſes 4 feet.—According to Niebuhr, 3 feet 6 inches.

Longitude, by obſervation at Mocha, 43° 7′ eaſt of Paris.

lidity. It is only of the thickneſs of one brick, ſo that the wind, the rains, or the firing of the guns, is often ſufficient to bring down this roof upon the heads of thoſe who are beneath it.

Theſe batteries, which a ſingle ſhot would demoliſh, have a flag-ſtaff, on which the ſtandard of Mahomet is diſplayed every Friday: this is a red flag, with a white two-bladed ſword in the middle. The figure of the ſword is miſerably delineated; the handle is extremely ſhort, and the two blades are ſo awkwardly deſigned, that, inſtead of ſword, one might take them for a pair of breeches.

The town is of a circular form, and has ſix gates: of theſe, one is called the Sacred Gate, through which no foreigners are permitted to paſs; and if any one ſhould be raſh enough to attempt it in ſpite of the prohibition, he would expoſe himſelf to danger from the Bedouins, who are always encamped on the outſide, and who might puniſh his temerity with a dagger.

The town is without a ditch or any external defence, and the wall all round is every where acceſſible. The foundations and firſt tier of the wall, to the height of four feet in ſome places, and in others only three, conſiſt of large ſtones intermixed with pieces of coral, which proves that the materials were ſcarce when the town was completed, and that they uſed for the walls whatever they could find. Next to theſe ſtones is a maſonry of brickwork four feet thick, and extending to the height of from fifteen to eighteen feet. At the top a parapet is raiſed of the thickneſs of a ſingle brick only, with holes, through which to fire muſketry. The platform may be about three feet and a half wide, and the whole is built ſo ſlightly, that on every violent ſtorm part of it gives way and tumbles into the town. This feeble wall is fortified every four

hundred yards by a large tower, ſimilar to the forts I have deſcribed, and in the ſame defective ſtate. Thoſe which defend the Sacred Gate are the only ones capable of any reſiſtance; they are in ſome degree firm, are covered, have even lodgments within, and perhaps would not, like the reſt, be levelled by the firſt ball of a cannon.

On looking at theſe fortifications, it is plain—what will hardly be credited in Europe—that, when a place is attacked, the aſſault is made by cavalry. Three or four ſhots will make a very large breach, which a further cannonade ſoon renders ſmooth and practicable for horſes; the cavalry then ſet off in a gallop, and the town is inſtantly taken. This is their only mode of aſſault; they are ignorant of any other. Their artilery is in the ſame rude ſtate as their military tactics. It conſiſts wholly of iron pieces mounted on naval carriages, which they remove with great difficulty from one place to another. I was ſtrongly ſolicited to enter into the ſervice of the iman, for the purpoſe of taking the direction of this part of their force; and for a while I would readily have conſented, but for the fatal condition of the turban, which was not to be diſpenſed with, and which I could not even think of without ſhuddering.

The greater gart of the materials employed in the building of Mocha was obtained from Aden, a town that was formerly opulent: it is ſituated outſide the ſtrait, in one of the fineſt bays in the world. Its poſition is ſo excellent, that Alexander, it is ſaid, would have made it the centre of the commerce which he purpoſed to eſtabliſh with India. The iman of Sana, deſirous of attracting veſſels to his dominions, fixed however upon the little bay of Mocha, to which he annexed ſo many privileges and encouragements, that Aden, notwithſtanding

the ſuperiority of its harbour, and the impoſſibility of getting through the ſtraits from the other, except during the particular monſoon, was abandoned, and all the commerce transferred to the new eſtabliſhment; ſo that Aden exhibited ſhortly a picture only of ruins. Mocha reaped advantages from this forlorn condition of its neighbour; and is now continually receiving ſtones and other materials from the wreck of that town, of which the veſtiges that remain are ſcarcely ſufficient to determine what was its former extent. At a diſtance in the offing, ſome turrets and a wall are ſtill diſtinguiſhable on the hill, at the foot of which is the entrance of the bay; but the town itſelf no longer exiſts: a wonderful example of the inconſtancy of fortune, which has removed into a hole in the midſt of a barren plain, where the water even is ſcarcely fit to drink, the proſperity which a town admirably ſituated was unable to preſerve, though enjoying all the advantages ſuitable to navigation, together with a fertile ſoil, among mountains and valleys, that gave health and pleaſantneſs to the ſcene. One of the cauſes that contributed moſt to the removal of the commerce to Mocha was, that the market for coffee being in the territory of the iman of Sana, he wiſhed to have it ſhipped from a port within the boundary of his ſtates, and for that purpoſe laid upon the article ſo heavy a duty when it was taken to Aden, that the merchants to avoid this charge adopted the practice of ſhipping it at Mocha.

Next to the gate called the Sacred Gate, towards the north ſide of the town, is the one called *Babel-mamoudy*. The French conſul has the right of making his entrance on horſeback through this gate, without being obliged to alight before the houſe of the governor; a privilege in this country that is by no means trifling. It is on a ſpot outſide this gate

that the Chriſtians are buried who die in the town. There are two tombs, with an inſcription to inform paſſengers, that they were raiſed to the memory of two captains of veſſels trading to Mocha. The reſt of the premiſes contains only the remains of a heap of bricks ſcattered over the ground. It is from the ſituation of this ſpot that the children ſo frequently exclaim, *Frangi, Babel-mamoudy!* which ſignifies *Chriſtians to the burying-ground;* a wiſh which they expreſs in running after foreigners in the ſtreets. This hatred is deep, and would be difficult to extirpate.

I was received upon my landing in the uſual manner: a party of the principal officers of the cuſtom-houſe, preceded by the French factors, came to meet me, and conducted me under the Bahar, or *gate of the ſea.* The *emir bahar* was there in council, and gave me a place by his ſide. He roſe up to receive me, laying his right hand upon his heart, which is the cuſtomary ſalutation. We were perfumed at firſt with incenſe of benzoïn and oil of roſes, and then with a ſort of aloes wood, which is valuable and ſcarce; it gives a ſmell in burning that is exquiſitely ſweet. It is in great requeſt with the Arabs and Perſians, who purchaſe it at the price of an equal weight of gold. They cut, and even grate ſmall quantities of it to burn, and are careful to receive the ſmoke of it in their clothes. After this ceremony, the emir entertained us with coffee, which I found it impoſſible to drink. The Arabs in general do not roaſt their coffee, nor make, as we do, the liquor from the berry, but uſe for this purpoſe the pulp only, which we throw away. This they dry, and make of it a ſlight infuſion, like tea *. The beverage thus made is extremely inſipid, though deemed refreſhing by them, and of a more delicate

* Niebuhr ſays the ſame, page 49, edition of Copenhagen.

taſte than the coffee drank by Europeans; but my palate, I confeſs, was not refined enough to diſcover its excellence, and I thought it ſcarcely better than hot water. I could not conceal my repugnance, which was not the way to confirm me in the favour of the emir, who was a grave perſonage, but extremely civil, and who had received me with conſiderable kindneſs. I made my apology by means of my Bannian, who informed him of my diſlike. The ceremony of the coffee being over, I was perfumed again, and diſmiſſed; that is, the French factors conducted me to the houſe of the governor, amidſt a great crowd, who ſhouted, ſung, howled, and made ſuch loud and hideous noiſes that I was almoſt deafened. To do honour to my entry, the governor, as was the cuſtom, had ſent with thoſe who were to meet me, two horſes richly capariſoned, and which were made to carry themſelves prancingly, wheeling from ſide to ſide. The duſt occaſioned by their motions, and by the concourſe of people that accompanied me, added to the heat of the ſun, which was ſcorching, and the noiſe of the barbarous inſtruments with which they regaled me, rendered the journey almoſt inſupportable, though it was a ſhort one, for we had only to croſs the ſquare belonging to the cuſtom-houſe: we proceeded however at a very ſlow rate. When we arrived at the governor's houſe, we had to aſcend a narrow flight of ſteps, at the landing-place of which I was aſked for my ſword. I refuſed to deliver it, and was preparing without further ceremony to return, when my factors ſtopped me, and the governor was informed of my conduct, who gave orders to let me do as I pleaſed. I entered the audience-chamber, where an arm-chair was brought me, antiquated, worm-eaten, and large, like thoſe which are delineated in ancient pictures of chivalry. I was plac-

ed oppoſite the governor, and two ſoldiers with ſabres and ſhields were ſtationed, one on each ſide of me. The governor, who was an old man, after ſaluting me in the manner of the Arabs, by laying his hand upon his heart, made a ſign to me with his finger to be ſeated, pointing to the arm-chair. As I did not underſtand his ſalutation and was ignorant of the meaning of his other motion. I diſregarded the ſign; and, conceiving that he offered me his hand, I took it, and, to his great ſurpriſe, gave it a cordial ſqueeze. I obſerved a geſture in the ſoldiers, as if to prevent me; but, whether checked by a look of their maſter, or of ſome other perſon, they did not touch me. I took my ſeat, and the firſt compliment being over, the governor aſked me by an interpreter, why I had rufuſed to ſurrender my ſword. I gave him to underſtand, that, being a military officer, a cuſtom eſtabliſhed in my country forbade me to ſurrender it without fighting; and that it was deemed as diſgraceful in Europe to give up our arms, as it would be thought here in him to give up his turban, if any one ſhould have the inſolence to demand it. He laughed heartily at the compariſon, and making a ſign to the ſoldiers, they withdrew. I was then perfumed anew, and had coffee preſented to me; but my Bannian telling him that I had diſliked this beverage at the houſe of the emir, he ſent to the apartments of the women for a pilaw, which I was obliged to taſte for fear of offending him, and indeed I had no reaſon to repent my compliance, for I found it delicious. He was highly delighted, and, judging from his civilities, I might have eaten my fill. I expreſſed my gratitude for the kind reception he had given me, and begged his indulgence and protection if, as a foreigner, I ſhould fail of obſerving the cuſtoms of the country, of which I was ignorant; adding, that it would be

always involuntary on my part, ſhould I ever be the occaſion of complaint to him. He obligingly replied, that I might in all inſtances rely upon him, and that he ſhould be happy in giving me proofs of his friendſhip. At the ſame time he accorded me the privilege of walking in his gardens, and particularly on Fridays, when I ſhould be more, he ſaid, at my eaſe, as it was the day of moſque, and he ſhould himſelf be in town: I had only to ſend in my name; but he requeſted, if I ſhould be told any of his women were there, that I would not go in. With this ſingle exception, I might bathe, and ſhould be waited upon whenever I pleaſed; and he added, that it would be a pleaſure to him to ſee me availing myſelf of the liberty he had offered me. This amiable old man was not long governor after this period, as I ſhall relate in the ſequel; but, when reduced to a private ſtation, I ſtill continued to cultivate his friendſhip. He was a Sayd, that is to ſay, of the tribe of Mahomet; in conſequence of which he retained the green turban, and continued to enjoy a high degree of reſpect.

The houſe of the governor is a large ſquare building, with ſmall windows looking towards the ground appropriated to the exerciſe of the cavalry. His ſeraglio is on the firſt floor of this building, and he lives himſelf on the ſecond, for the benefit of the air: the interior diſtribution is the ſame as that of the houſes in general.

Near to one corner of this ground is a large caravanſary, which is occupied only at the time of the pilgrimages to Mecca. It is a large ſquare building, incloſing a court, with a fountain in the middle for the ablutions preſcribed by the law of Mahomet. The building is merely a ſhed extending round the court, without either door or windows, and ſupported by pillars. It very ſeldom rains at Mocha; and

the roofs of these sheds are so low, that, were it otherwise, the rain could not well annoy those who are under them.

This spacious building has but a single opening, which is the door. The ground before the front of it is of sufficient extent for the camels and asses of the travellers, who lodge at the caravansary at a trifling expense, of which the object is solely to defray the charges of keeping it clean.

I was conducted back with the same parade to the French lodge, where M. de Moncrif, agent to the French marine, liberated me from my retinue, by throwing among the mob the value of a couple of piastres, in small pieces of money.

I am happy to inform the reader, that my reception at this place had nothing in it peculiar or personal to myself; with the exception of the great kindness of the governor, it is the usual etiquette, every captain that arrives being received in the same manner.

As there is a ceremony observed on arriving, so there is one also at departing; which is to take leave of the governor. The usual time for this is a little before the third prayer in the evening. The visitor, when he comes into the presence of the governor, is immediately muffled up in a red Arabian robe, which is thrown over his clothes by two men, and which he carries away with him as a mark of friendship, and token of the hospitality of the Arabs. At my departure I received an elegant cashmir robe of this kind, which I used as a dressing-gown for the remainder of my voyage.

There are two European lodges or factories at Mocha, one for the French, and one for the English; and each nation has the privilege of having its own flag over its appropriate habitation. That belonging to the French is a very poor building, of

which the warehouſes only are good: but the Engliſh one is handſome, and can without difficulty accommodate the officers of five or ſix veſſels. The French houſe, on the contrary, is only ſufficient for the conſul, ſo that every captain of that nation has to provide for himſelf a lodging elſewhere, which is a ſerious evil in caſe of any diſpute with the people, who are extremely quarrelſome, and would prevent the French, if they could, from aſſembling together, that, by taking them ſingly they might the more readily get the better of them. The Engliſh have the advantage of a manſion that would maintain a ſiege, and by being together they might defend themſelves for a time, eſcape to the ſhore, and get on board their ſhips, in ſpite of the inhabitants and ſoldiers combined; for the latter are ſo extremely ill armed, that twenty reſolute men with bayonets fixed would be ſufficient to put any one of their battalions into confuſion.

Almoſt contiguous to the caravanſary is the cuſtom-houſe, from which the principal part of the revenue of the prince is derived. The governor is at the head of this department, and paſſes half the day there in a pavilion by the ſcales, examining the articles that are weighed, keeping an account of them himſelf, and regiſtering the receipt, which he pays without delay into the exchequer. The ſlighteſt inſtance of neglect on his part would be charged as an act of diſhoneſty, and might bring upon him very ſerious conſequences. The governor, who had treated me with ſo much kindneſs, loſt his place, and was heavily fined by the iman, for having omitted ſome item in the ſtatement of a receipt. Another Sayd, whom I ſaw in priſon, and who profeſſed great attachment to the French, had his feet, as well as hands, loaded with irons, for purloining the duty on a ſmall quantity of tobacco

of about ſix pounds' weight. It was by dint only of money, that, after being a whole year in priſon, he ſaved his life.

The officers of government are employed all day long in this buſineſs; every article of merchandize having an account taken of it, and being ſubject to a duty. The cuſtom-houſe is a large ſquare incloſure, with a ſhed extending round it, where the different articles are depoſited, and remain till they are officially cleared.

There are three moſques at Mocha, two of which are ſmall, and the other large and handſome, with very high domes. The Arabs do not uſe bells, but have men who ſtand in a little gallery built round the dome, and call the faithful to prayers, as loudly as their lungs will permit them. They are heard diſtinctly, particularly at night, vociferating in a hollow tone from theſe ſtations. To me nothing could be more awkward and unalluring than this method of ſummoning the people to the duties of religion.

The Muſſulmans attend the moſques regularly every day, though allowed to pray in their own houſes; but Friday is the principal day of ſolemnity, as Sunday is with us. On that day the governor goes to moſque in the morning in great ſtate, at the head of all the troops, both cavalry and infantry. Having performed his devotions, he is conducted back in the ſame manner by the whole garriſon, when the infantry form along one ſide of the ground before his houſe, and the cavalry perform their exerciſe. The governor at their head begins ſome courſes on a gallop, which they call manœuvres, after which the troops form in two lines, and charge, brandiſhing a long lance; the horſes are well on the haunches, which gives them the power of ſtopping ſhort on their hocks, even when going full ſpeed.

To break the horſes to this exerciſe, their legs are tied together in the ſtable, each fore foot to the correſponding hind foot, with the diſtance of about twelve inches between. In this poſture they contract the habit of drawing themſelves up, and are extremely pleaſant to ride: they are naturally ſo ſtrong, that this practice does not in the leaſt injure their fleetneſs. There are ſeveral kinds of Arabian horſes. The ſort called *Maſcatt* is produced by a mixture with the Perſian breed, and is ſlender, light, and delicately formed: that of Yemen is a native of the country, large and vigorous, the head and loins ſquare, and the cheſt thick; in running, what they loſe in lightneſs is compenſated by ſtrength.

After two charges of this kind, the governor breaks a lance with ſome of the principal officers, and the reſt in parties follow the example. They challenge and purſue each other, performing feats which require conſiderable dexterity. The challenger gives the reins to his horſe, which runs the whole length of the place in a gallop without ſtopping: his antagoniſt purſues him, and aims a blow at him behind with a ſtick, and which the addreſs of the other conſiſts in parrying with a ſimilar ſtick. As every officer has one or two attendants, he gives them his lance before he begins this encounter, and takes inſtead of it one of theſe ſticks, which is about five feet long, and is uſed as a javelin to dart at his enemy. If the horſeman that flies parries the throw, and makes the ſtick of his adverſary fall to the ground, he gains the conteſt; but the principal ſkill is either to ſtrike off the turban of his adverſary, or to dart the ſtick ſo directly on his back, that it may rebound, and the purſuer before it falls be able to recover it. This is the more difficult, becauſe, the diſtance being ſhort, and the horſes running full ſpeed, the courſe laſts as it were but an

inſtant; of courſe a great deal of alertneſs is requiſite.

The Arabs make uſe of bridles ſimilar, or nearly ſo, to ours; with bits like thoſe which the French call *à gorge de pigeon.* In riding they keep a very tight hand, ſo that the mouths of all their horſes have the bars very much bruiſed. They alſo make uſe of ſaddles; but the bows are ſo much higher than ours, and they place between the ſaddle and the horſe ſuch a quantity of cuſhions and cloths, that the rider is raiſed ſix inches at leaſt above the back of the animal. In this ſituation, the heels hardly reaching to the flank, he can neither avail himſelf of a ſpur, nor are his knees of any help to him in keeping his ſeat: the ſaddle however is ſo elevated with truſſiquins both before and behind, that he ſeems to be placed as in a boat, from which nothing can diſlodge him. They have houſings as we have, and very magnificent ones, red, blue, and green, embroidered with gold. They have ſtirrups alſo, but no ſpurs. The ſtirrups do not reſemble ours, but are large copper ſhoes, in which they place the whole foot. As this ſhoe is larger than the foot, it extends at the heel, and it is with this extremity of the ſhoe or ſtirrup that they goad the ſide of the horſe: a blow given flatwiſe produces very little effect, but a kick with the end of it makes the horſe inſtantly obey, and gives him very great pain; for it is generally ſo ſharp as to be capable even of piercing the flank.

The horſes are not ſhod, the hoof growing ſo hard that it does not loſe its edge, and has ſeldom occaſion to be pared.

Theſe horſemen, when properly equipped, have each two attendants, a lance nearly twenty feet long, ſlender, and elaſtic, not intended to be thrown, two javelins about five or ſix feet, uſed for that

purpoſe, a brace of piſtols, and a ſabre and ſhield: the laſt two articles are not worn by the cavalier, but are faſtened to the ſaddle: their favourite weapon is the javelin. The whole is furniſhed by the iman; no one, as a matter of right, being allowed to poſſeſs a horſe through the whole of that prince's dominions. Theſe animals are all diſtributed by the ſovereign, who gives them to ſuch as he deems worthy of this mark of his favour, and takes them away again at his will. Every Arab of illuſtrious birth enters into the cavalry, and in this manner receives a horſe, which he maintains at his own expenſe, and may ride when he pleaſes. The officers of the cuſtom-houſe alſo belong to this corps, which is in this country as high a diſtinction as that of nobility in Europe. The cavaliers are very much reſpected; they wear no uniform; but dreſs every one as he likes, exhibiting a motley and uncouth appearance to ſuch as have been accuſtomed to the regularity of dreſs in European troops. They ride in their beniſh and trowſers, reſembling ſo many judges rather than ſoldiers, and have nothing in their air that is in the ſmalleſt degree military. To look at them, it is impoſſible to ſuppoſe that the whole corps could ſtand againſt ten well-armed men, notwithſtanding the ſuperiority of their horſes. As to their ſingle combats, it is pretty evident that in point of agility and ſkill no one of theſe cavaliers would be a match for an huſſar; not but that moſt of them are ſkilful in the management of their horſes, which are often however of themſelves ſufficiently tractable. A young Sayd who was my neighbour, and brother of him whom I have mentioned as being in priſon and irons, was deſirous one day of giving me a ſpecimen of his addreſs in horſemanſhip. He fixed his long lance in the ground, and without letting it go put his horſe into a canter

round it, firſt to the right and then to the left, changing his hand under his right arm, without for a moment ſtopping his horſe, or quitting his hold of the lance.

The foot-ſoldiers are taken from the maſs of the people; they are a moſt wretched body of troops, without the ſlighteſt idea of military movements; they march in confuſion, and are with difficulty drawn up in files three deep. The dreſs of theſe ſoldiers conſiſts of a linen ſhirt in the manner of the country, and a drapery of coarſe brown cloth. The commander is armed with a battle-axe, and the ſoldiers with match-locks, of the moſt ancient conſtruction. The match is carried in the right hand, but the ſoldier applies it to the pan with his left in ſuch a manner that in doing it he can preſerve no ſteadineſs, and generally burns either his hand or his whiſker. Their pay is barely ſufficient for their ſubſiſtence; and even what they receive is very irregularly iſſued. If a complaint be at any time made to the ſovereign againſt a perſon that is rich, he is fined a certain ſum and turned over to the military, to whom it is conſigned as pay, either in arrear or advance. The ſoldiers are fond of being paid in this way, becauſe the collection veſting in themſelves, they are ſure of getting it; they will beſides admit of no delay, and in doing themſelves juſtice are apt to exceed rather than fall ſhort of the ſum that is impoſed.

Theſe ſoldiers are brought with great difficulty to any degree of diſcipline. They are compoſed of the lower order of people in the towns, the inhabitants of the mountain, and ſome Bedouins, or Arabs of the deſert, who enliſt from being unable to maintain themſelves at home. They are black, with ſhining or frizzled hair, according as they are of Arabian or Abyſſinian extraction, but generally

the former. The nobility are almoſt white, their copper tint being ſo light, that many of the Sayds are fairer than the quadroons in our colonies. The children reſulting from an intercourſe of theſe Sayds with their Abyſſinian ſlaves have a mixture of the African characteriſtics; but thoſe produced from women of their own race perpetuate its beauty, and have every other Aſiatic diſtinction. They ſupply their ſeraglios with females from Abyſſinia, of whom whole cargoes arrive at a time. I have ſeen among them ſome women of exquiſite beauty; they are black, but nothing is ſo bewitching as their form, or ſo elegant and graceful as their motions. I was one day ſo ſtruck with one of theſe ſlaves as ſhe landed from her *daou*, that I inſtantly made a propoſal by my Bannian to purchaſe her: ſhe lifted up a dirty piece of coarſe blue cloth, which ſerved her for a veil, and expoſed a moſt charming figure. I inquired her price; but the merchant, ſeeing it was a Chriſtian who wanted her, anſwered, that he ſuppoſed my Bannian to have ſpoken in behalf of ſome Muſſulman, and refuſed to treat with me.

Beſide theſe girls, the Abyſſinians ſend alſo cattle to this market, and among them a ſpecies of ſheep of the African breed, with large tails and long hair, preciſely like thoſe at the Cape of Good Hope.

A great number of Bedouins repair to Mocha, to purchaſe ſuch articles as they want. They are Arabs of a vagabond tribe, wandering about the mountains. Their dreſs and appearance are by no means prepoſſeſſing; and as to manners, they are in general moroſe, inſolent, and to an offenſive word will often reply with a ſtroke of a dagger. They are the more dangerous, as they do not heſitate to fall many upon one. They uſually encamp without the Sacred Gate where their camels are an

obſtruction to the paſſage. Their complexion is black, and they have ſhining black hair. They are robuſt and well made, have a ſavage aſpect, go always armed to the very chin, and are extremely quarrelſome. I had ſome of them introduced to my houſe for the purpoſe of being acquainted with them, and I treated them with hoſpitality to prejudice them in my favour, intending to viſit a ſmall town called Moza, about four leagues diſtant in the mountains; and as I wiſhed to go on horſeback without attendants, and to walk about freely in the day, I ſhould be liable frequently to meet great numbers of them. Moſt of them refuſed what I offered; others, while eating my pilaw, could not lay aſide their ferocity: one only violated their precept by accepting ſome brandy: he aſſured me afterwards, that their tribe would do me no injury, which I found to be true. I have paſſed frequently ſince through a troop of theſe people, and have ſtopped to look at their camels, without their expreſſing either diſſatisfaction or pleaſure.

Mocha is built on a very indifferent plan; the ſtreets are well adapted to the country, but an European would think them diſagreeable; the houſes are lofty, and the ſtreets narrow, for the purpoſe of being ſhaded. This method, which would ſeemingly check the circulation of the air, contributes however to keep the ſtreets cool; and when the weather is hot they are frequently watered. There is not a ſtreet in the whole town ſufficiently wide for a cart to paſs through, and it is as much as the camels when loaded can effect.

The middle of the town is occupied by the bazar, of which half is covered in, deriving light from holes made at regular diſtances in the roof. This bazar is a perfect labyrinth, in which I was twenty times loſt. It is under the covered part of the

building that the market for dry goods, such as linen, silks, glass, porcelain, &c. is held. At one end of it is the street leading to the Sacred Gate, and it is here that grain, dry fruit, oil, grease, &c. are exposed to sale. The smell of this part of the bazar is dreadful. The Arabs make great use of *asa-fœtida*, and the market was at all times full of this commodity. The stench arising from it, added to the smell of the oil, was intolerable to me; and whenever, compelled by business, I passed that way, though I escaped as expeditiously as possible, the odour still followed me, and I was obliged to hasten home and fumigate my clothes with incense, to destroy the effluvia of this odious drug, of which I can now scarcely write the name without resorting in like manner to the use of perfumes.

The population of Mocha is very considerable; I reckon it at eighteen thousand souls, exclusively of the camp of the Jews, which is close to the south side of the town. The houses are all built of brick, with extremely small openings for light, except the blind on each story, which is an enclosed balcony, with apertures to look through. They resemble at a distance the balconies in Spain, and at first sight Mocha has very much the appearance of a Spanish town.

The houses have uniformly argamasse roofs, with a little shed, called *pandals*, erected on them, and covered with matting on account of the dew, which is heavy here, as in all countries where there is very little rain: under these pandals the inhabitants pass the evening, and frequently the night. For myself, I could sleep no where else, not only from the violence of the heat, but on account also of the cats. This town is the patrimony of these animals; nothing can equal their voraciousness and disposition to theft. The windows being obliged to be open all

night for the ſake of the air, they have an opportunity of entering and rummaging the apartments, where they ſquall, fight, and make ſo terrible a racket, that it is impoſſible to ſleep; and inſtead of going away when they are driven, they will growl, ſet up their backs in defiance, and almoſt attack you. I killed or cauſed to be killed every four-and-twenty hours half a dozen regularly of theſe animals; but they were the lernian hydra, the more I deſtroyed, the greater number returned. At laſt I reſigned to them my apartment, and went on the houſe-top to ſleep, where they gave me no diſturbance.

The houſes of the Arabs are much leſs convenient than ours. The moſt uſeful articles of their furniture are in the higheſt degree awkward: their locks in particular are maſter-pieces of ignorance; the box, ſprings, bolt, key, are all made of wood, and ſo unwieldly as to weigh at leaſt twenty pounds: nor do they anſwer the purpoſe for which they are intended; any key will open them as well as that which was made for the purpoſe, and which will often indeed not do ſo. The houſes are almoſt all built on the ſame plan. The ſtair-caſe leads to a large anti-chamber, common to the whole floor, having the apartments round it. Inſtead of pavement or flooring, they have ſlight beams of palm-wood covered with ſtraw, and over this lime. This ſort of floor has very little ſolidity, and is never level, ſo that a table with four legs will ſeldom ſtand firm. The hall in which viſitors are received is covered with a carpeting of ſtraw, and has a mattreſs laid round the ſides, on which are a great quantity of cuſhions to ſit or lie upon at pleaſure, with ſmall Perſian carpets at the feet, when the intention is to be ſumptuous. Above, all round the room, is one or more ſhelves loaded with porcelain, which is the luxury of the country. They

have no looking-glaſſes, nor any coſtly articles of furniture: porcelain conſtitutes the whole of their decorations. In the middle of the room a kind of garden is erected in the form of an amphitheatre, the centre of which is occupied by a large hooka, furniſhed with pipes for the uſe of the company, and the circumference with pots of flowers, and particularly baſil, which is highly eſteemed.

The great felicity of an Arab is to be in a current of air, lolling upon a pile of cuſhions, imbibing the vapour of perfumes which are burnt at his ſide, and ſmoking ſupinely his hooka, with no thought, no care to moleſt him, perſuaded that the next day will bring with it a return of the ſame indolence, and the ſame enjoyments. The firſt ſtory of a houſe is uſually occupied by the women, who are ſeldom to be ſeen, and who have a ſmall court appropriated to them in the inner part of the building, towards which their balconies look.

One of our friends, not very rich, of the race of the inhabitants of the mountains, and of courſe extremely black, gave us one day an invitation to his houſe, which we readily accepted. He introduced us into an apartment ſimilar to the one I have deſcribed. I was deſirous of ſeeing his ſeraglio, and I requeſted the favour of him, but to no purpoſe; he would not conſent. Finding me earneſt in this point, he alleged at laſt motives of religion, which ſilenced me; but, in conſequence of my importunity, he ſuffered his women to drink their ſherbet with us. They were three in number, and were veiled; one of them was his ſiſter. We were talking Portugueſe, and were jovial and merry; but as ſoon as they entered, he begged us to aſſume a graver deportment. The ſherbet was brought, and I waited expecting the women to unveil: but no; they received their cups with a *ſalam**, and drank under

* A ſort of ſalutation or compliment.—T.

their veils. The extreme blackneſs of their hands in ſome degree moderated my deſire of ſeeing their faces, and there was beſides nothing very alluring in their figure; yet, like a true Frenchman, I conceived it a mark of politeneſs to expreſs the wiſh, that, by ſeeing, I might have an opportunity of admiring them. Our friend however would by no means conſent to this, except as to his ſiſter; and here he previouſly enjoined on us the greateſt circumſpection, which we promiſed to obſerve. She was then ordered to unveil. At firſt ſhe made an appearance of heſitating; but a repetition of the command determined her, and ſhe let down an *ourgandi* that was faſtened to her head, and diſcovered a handſome negro perſon, with fine eyes, prominent boſom, and a delicate ſkin. From being expoſed in this manner to the gaze of two Chriſtians, ſhe appeared to ſuffer pain, and ſat in a ſtate of embarraſſment difficult to be expreſſed, caſting down her eyes, without daring to look at us. Her brother meanwhile was watching all her motions. At laſt propoſing to me a cup of ſherbet, I ſaid that I would take one with pleaſure, if his ſiſter would do me the honour to preſent it to me. This ſeemingly diſpleaſed him, for he made her a ſign, upon which the veil was reſumed, and the three women withdrew inſtantly. After this, he would never admit his ſiſter into my preſence. I was piqued at his continued refuſal, and endeavoured in every way I could deviſe to obtain without his knowledge a ſight of her. He however heard of my proceedings, and reproached me in terms expreſſive not only of the danger I was incurring, but of the ingratitude with which I requited his friendſhip. His remonſtrances made me aſhamed of my conduct; and I gave up a purſuit which honour forbade, and a temporary dereliction of duty had tempted me to carry too far.

The dreſs of the Arabs is well underſtood, yet in our theatres the Turkiſh turban is continually confounded with theirs. The turban of the Arabs has one, and ſometimes two pendants behind, like the mitre of our biſhops, diſtinguiſhing it from that of the other Muſſulmans. Theſe pendants are merely the ends of the cloth of which the turban is made.

Their beniſh or robe, in the fulneſs of the body and the ſleeves, is nearly like that of the benedictine monks. Under this, they have a ſilk coat, covering a tunic (jacket without ſleeves) of linen, or other light materials; and underneath theſe again, a piece of linen, muſlin, or ſome ſimilar ſtuff, in the manner of drawers. The form in which this laſt is worn between the legs gives it a little the appearance of breeches, that is, it covers the thighs tolerably well as low as the knees; but it ſlides up when they ride on horſeback, and they are obliged to cover their nakedneſs with their robe. Their ſaſh or girdle is ſometimes exceedingly large, for they wear no pockets, but faſten every thing they have to carry round their loins.

They are always armed with a poignard; but it differs greatly from the weapon bearing that name in Europe. The blade is wide, ſmooth, and curved, with two ridges on the ſides, commencing at the broadeſt part, and meeting at the point. The handle is ſhort and ſloping in the middle, ſo that the end anſwering to the pommel, extending beyond the hand, prevents the inſtrument from ſliding, and gives a firm hold. The ſhape of this weapon is altogether a curve, nearly like the figure denoting a parentheſis; ſo that the wound which it makes, though extremely wide, is difficult to be probed, from not being ſtraight. The Arabs generally ſtrike downwards, or elſe from left to right; in the former caſe, the bend or curve of the poignard is below, and in the latter the point is directed inwards.

The whole dreſs of the Arabs is admirably adapted to the climate. Nothing can be more refreſhing than their ample garments, which allow a free circulation of the air, leave all the joints of the body unreſtrained, and impede none of its motions.

Mahomet had a ſtrong partiality for the colours of green and red; and theſe colours have on this account been appropriated to ſuch Arabs as are deſcended from him, or belong to his tribe. Thoſe who conſider themſelves as his deſcendants aſſume the title of Sayd, and are greatly reſpected. There were three of theſe perſonages at Mocha, of whom two having incurred the diſpleaſure of the iman, one was put into irons, and the other deprived of his place of governor: for theſe gentry, notwithſtanding the eſtimation in which they are held by the people, are equally ſubjected with the reſt of the nation to the will of the ſovereign, who puniſhes them even leſs ſparingly when they tranſgreſs, as indulgence in that reſpect would embolden and perhaps render them dangerous. In the hands of prejudice or fanaticiſm, the title they enjoy might be converted into a formidable inſtrument: it is therefore the policy of the ſovereign to give them a feeling of their dependence, leſt, availing themſelves of the name of Mahomet, they ſhould attempt to throw off the yoke. Their mark of diſtinction is a green turban, of which they are extremely jealous. They ſeldom wear a red one, or a red robe, green being their favourite colour, from its ſuppoſed ſuperiority. The privilege of wearing it extends alſo to the principal officers of government, but only while they are in office: the governor of Mocha has a green robe and turban, while he occupies that ſtation; but if not a Sayd, as ſoon as his place is taken from him, he reſigns theſe marks of diſtinction, whereas the Sayds always retain them*.

* Niebuhr, p. 10, is of a different opinion as to the green turban.

The Arabs divide the day into four-and-twenty hours, as we do, beginning with ſix in the evening. When they purchaſe any of our watches, they put the hand at ſunſet to twelve, and as the figures on the plate are different from theirs, the handle ſerves as a mark to direct them in counting: ſo that when the hand comes round to this mark, inſtead of calling it twelve o'clock, as we do, they call it ſix. In their diviſion of the year they reckon by lunations, and are very exact in announcing the appearance of a new moon: there is even a reward for the firſt who diſcovers it. As ſoon as it is perceived, a piece of ordnance is diſcharged at one of the batteries, and the inhabitants of the town make great rejoicings. They firſt go to prayers, and afterwards ſpend the reſt of the day as a feſtival in their families.

At the diſtance of about five hundred paces from Mocha, to the ſouth, the Jews have a camp, where they live in ſtraw huts. They are prohibited from reſiding in the town, but are at liberty to do as they pleaſe in their camp, which is often riotous enough: for the Mahometans not admitting the uſe of ſtrong liquors among them, the ſailors can no where procure any but of the Jews, who ſell them bad arrack, diſtilled from rice. Theſe Jews are numerous, their population amounting to twelve or fifteen hundred. I did not obſerve among them a ſingle individual who was not a complete negro: they have ſleek and ſhining hair, and are ſimilar in all reſpects to the Parias in India.

If the Jewiſh families of Europe, and the celebrated beauties we ſometimes find among their women, are really deſcended from the ſame ſtock as the Jews of Mocha; if, faithful to the prejudice which forbids them from intermarrying with families of a different religion, the deſcent has thus been preſerved ſtrictly Jewiſh on each ſide without adulter-

ation; we have nothing to which to impute the difference I have deſcribed, but the operation of climate. Their black colour would then not be inherent in their race, but would merely be a change effected by the ſun. I do not pretend to ſupport this hypotheſis by a fact of ſo dubious a nature as the difference of colour. On the contrary, I am convinced, that the eaſtern Jews muſt anciently have intermixed with European families, and that an anceſtry of five hundred years, purely Jewiſh, without any alloy whatever, could not be found among them. Be this as it may, the Jews of Mocha are poor and oppreſſed, are the reverſe of handſome, and very uncleanly. Thoſe young females in the ſynagogues at Hamburg or Amſterdam, who gain an admirer by every glance, would be ſhocked at the idea of being compared even with the moſt captivating beauties among their tribe at Mocha.

Beſides that of the Jews, another ſtrange caſt is tolerated here even in the town itſelf: theſe are the Bannians. Of all the variety of religions, ſects, ſocieties, and caſts which exiſt, that of the Bannians, beyond contradiction, is the one that does moſt honour to humanity. In the exerciſe of the ſocial virtues they have no parallel. One of their chief precepts, as is well known, is to love every thing that breathes, to aſſiſt every thing that is in pain, to abhor the ſpilling of blood, and to abſtain from food that has enjoyed life; and they practiſe this precept in its utmoſt rigour. Nothing can induce them to take any other nouriſhment than milk, butter, cheeſe, rice, and vegetables. They are particularly tender in their treatment of all ſorts of animals. Mocha abounds with dogs, which have no owners, and which live in a ſouthern part of the town, where they are ſeen in packs, ſleeping three-fourths of the day in ſmall holes, which they dig them-

ſelves. To me nothing can be ſo offenſive and diſguſting as theſe animals: many of them attain to a great age, and all without exception are devoured by the mange, deſtitute of hair, quarrelſome, and almoſt famiſhed; they bark, or ſet up a howl at every one who paſſes, and are objects of deteſtation to the inhabitants. They are not ſuffered to enter the town; and they keep therefore in one ſituation, where they multiply ſo faſt, that, whatever havoc is made among them, their number ſeems never to diminiſh. The Bannians extend their compaſſion to theſe deteſtable animals, and even take particular care of them: they bake little loaves of bread for food, which they carry to them almoſt every hour in the day: one or other of this tribe is ſeen continually paſſing with a little copper pot of water in one hand, and a loaf in the other. The dogs know them, and as ſoon as a Bannian is perceived they haſten to him in ſwarms: the moſt eager get a few bits of bread, and others a little water, while thoſe who get nothing wait the arrival of another Bannian, who ſhortly appears and diſpenſes in the ſame manner his water and loaf. Their dreſs is a white robe and roſe-coloured turban; the different tribes of animals know them ſo well, that the pigeons are often extremely troubleſome, and no bird ever flies away to avoid them. I have never ſeen a Bannian take any bird, though I have ſeen inſtances of their feeding them on the buſhes; though I have ſeen them ſcatter rice at their feet, and the birds, wild to other men, flock round and tranquilly pick it up, like ſo many poultry in a farm-yard. In ſhort, the moſt timid animals approach them without the leaſt apprehenſion; and the moſt ſucceſsful mode of hunting would certainly be in the diſguiſe of a Bannian, were it poſſible ſo flagrantly to abuſe the confidence which the amiable manners of this caſt have gained them.

Their horror at every thing dead can hardly be deſcribed. One of them, named Ramji, came often to my houſe at the time of my meals to give an account of ſome buſineſs or other he had tranſacted for me. When any of my people wiſhed to play him a trick, they contrived that a little broiled fiſh ſhould fall as by accident upon his hand. The poor fellow upon this would cry out as in an agony, and run to waſh himſelf with an eagerneſs and care, that could only be equalled by the terror he felt at the circumſtance. The flies in all hot countries are eager for drink, and are very often drowned in the diſhes and glaſſes. Ramji would willingly have ſpent a whole day in reſtoring one of theſe inſects to life. A method was pointed out to him of putting them into ſalt to recover them; and he was ſo overjoyed at the diſcovery, that he never came to me afterwards without a handkerchief full of ſalt, to ſave the lives of as many as he could. Theſe marks of character, though trifling, may ſerve to depict the extraordinary good-nature and ſweetneſs of manners of theſe people.

Their diſpoſition is frank and open; a Bannian is ignorant of prevarication and falſehood. The whole commerce of the Europeans is entruſted to them, they alone being able to deal with the Arabs. What they receive for their trouble is extremely moderate, yet are their probity and honour proof againſt every temptation. The Engliſh factor here is extremely rich; the French ones are by no means equally ſo, the government having occaſioned them very conſiderable loſſes. Their commercial houſe was conducted in the names of Courji and Ramji, the firſt of whom had rendered ſuch ſervices, both to the company and the French in general, that he received from the king in acknowledgment a gold medal of the weight of ſix ounces, with the royal

portrait on one ſide, and a repreſentation on the other, of the ſun riſing upon a diſtant country; the legend on the portrait-ſide was, *Louis XVI. king of France and Navarre*, and on the other, *chief of the French factors at Yemen;* and the exergue, *I will extend my benefits to the end of the world.* This medal, which was faſtened to a gold chain, he wore round his neck, like the badge of an order, whenever he appeared in his habits of ceremony.

The Muſſulmans have a ſeaſon of ſolemnity and faſting ſimilar to our Lent, which laſts through the whole month of *Ramadan*, during which they are to eat nothing before ſun-ſet. This precept was evidently given to inculcate abſtinence; but they contrive to elude, while they would be thought to obſerve it, by obeying the letter and neglecting the ſpirit of the command: for they ſleep all day, and ſpend the night in rejoicings and merriment. During this ſeaſon not an individual is to be ſeen in the daytime; but the ſun has no ſooner ſunk below the horizon than the revelry begins. They traverſe the ſtreets ſinging, the houſes are illuminated, the people aſſemble in large parties, and the whole town reſembles a fair. I took the reſolution while it laſted of retiring to my veſſel for the ſake of repoſe; for the noiſe in the ſtreets, as ſoon as the night ſet in, made it impoſſible for me to ſleep. To crown my misfortune too, I lived next door to a rigid devotee, who, in performing the duties of Ramadan, uttered the moſt frightful cries, roaring Alla with the voice of a ſtentor, and driving away ſlumber from every eye. His window was oppoſite to mine, and I could not help ſuſpecting there was a little of the charlatan in his devotion; at leaſt, whenever I looked towards him, he threw himſelf upon the ground, and redoubled his cries of *Alla*, with an extravagance, that could only be the effect

either of groſs hypocriſy or the extremeſt fanaticiſm. As I could do no buſineſs, all the inhabitants being in bed, I lived on board my veſſel, and did not come aſhore till the laſt day, when the Ramadan terminated by a proceſſion. The governor in great ſtate, on a horſe covered with armour, carries the ſtandard of Mahomet at the head of the cavalry, preceded by the foot ſoldiers, and followed by the people. He ſets out from the principal moſque, and goes round the town outſide the ramparts, entering again the moſque, which is announced by a diſcharge of artillery. The Sayds walk after him, and every one diſplays on this occaſion all the luxury that his fortune will admit, which gives to the proceſſion an air of extraordinary grandeur and magnificence.

The Arabs pay religious homage to their dead. The burying-places are a ſhort diſtance from the town, where every one that dies has a tomb, more or leſs conſpicuous, to denote where he is interred. Theſe tombs are much frequented by the parents or friends of the deceaſed, who ſit upon the ground, abſorbed in grief, uttering groans, affecting deſpair, and making the moſt piteous howlings. At firſt I reſpected their ſorrow, and haſtened to a diſtance, whenever by accident I found myſelf near to them. I obſerved, that their cries were loud while I was preſent, and that the moment I was gone theſe mourners were ſilent. I ſuppoſed, therefore, that their ſufferings might be occaſioned by the horror they felt at the appearance of a Chriſtian; but my factor ſoon ſet me at eaſe on that point, by telling me, that it was all affectation; that their mourning in reality was an outward form, rather than a feeling of the heart; which made me afterwards leſs ſcrupulous in my conduct. Theſe tombs are not coſtly; they are a heap of bricks put together,

with no ornament, and moſt of them without an inſcription.

The Arabs are ſtrongly attached to their religion, are intolerant to all other ſects, and anxious to make proſelytes. A Chriſtian who embraces Mahometaniſm is ſure to obtain their favour and protection, but without enjoying any great ſhare of reſpect. Many Europeans have ſettled among them. The ſailor who deſerted from me at Cochin had formerly been ſhipwrecked in the neighbourhood of Mocha, where he was taken care of by the French conſul there. During his ſtay in the town he had embraced the Mahometan faith, had cried *Alla*, and been circumciſed. He had even married and ſettled himſelf: but taking advantage of the firſt veſſel that arrived, he made his eſcape, abandoning his houſe, his wife, and Mahomet together. As ſoon as he learned at Cochin my intention of going into the Red Sea, the dread of being apprehended and impaled induced him to deſert. I have mentioned how I regained him. Being thus, in ſpite of himſelf, obliged to viſit his old place of reſidence, he told me the whole of his ſtory, and begged me to protect him. This was eaſy enough; nothing was neceſſary but to order the officers on duty never to ſend him aſhore, nor put him into any of the boats, that he might not be ſeen and recollected. Unable however to keep his own ſecret, he told his companions, that he was prevented by the fear of puniſhment only from returning to his wife, and that he had never been more comfortable than when living among the Muſſulmans. Curioſity, and ſtill more the reſtleſs diſpoſition of ſailors, particularly thoſe of the French nation, put it into the heads of my crew to be Mahometans alſo, ſince, as he had done, they could deſert at laſt, if upon trial they diſliked the change. The firſt who ſet the example

was a ſtout Caffre, an excellent ſailor, and who ſpoke the Mooriſh tongue well. He waited at the door of the moſque till he ſaw the governor, when, crying *Alla*, he was immediately ſeized, and the next day, being circumciſed and clothed in the Arabian manner, he walked into Mocha my equal, and came to me in an inſolent manner, demanding his wages. I told him that every ſailor by deſerting forfeited his claim to whatever was due to him, that this was the law of all veſſels, and that I ſhould therefore give him nothing. I alſo preferred a complaint againſt his conduct to the new governor, who was juſt appointed inſtead of the one who had ſhowed me ſo much kindneſs; but all the ſatisfaction I could obtain was to have this proſelyte ſent out of the way, that he might no more inſult me in my own houſe. I deſired the conſul to inform the governor, that, as the ſailor was not a Frenchman, I ſhould take no further notice of the affair, but that I would not adviſe him to take from me any more of my crew, as I ſhould certainly find means of reſenting it. A few days after, the ſon of the hydrographer of the Iſle of France followed the example of my Caffre; he belonged to the crew of a ſmall brig, the captain of which took no notice of the affair, though I did every thing in my power to rouſe his reſentment.

It was not long before I was informed that another of my ſailors had been at the houſe of the governor to cry *Alla*, and, not ſeeing him, was going again the next day. I watched the moment of his return to my houſe, and, calling him before me, I reproached him with the wiſh to renounce his religion and his country. I then inſiſted on his going inſtantly on board, whither I was reſolved to have him conducted; and I ordered ſome cord to be brought to tie his hands behind him, that he might not eſcape. Upon this he made a geſture

as if to force the door, but seeing me armed he desisted: resolved however to desert, he threw himself out of the window. The room was on the second story, and there was at the height of the first what is called a *pandal* or shelter from the sun, made of a covering of mats, supported by poles. He thought, that by jumping upon this pandal, he might let himself fall from thence to the ground and so escape. He performed his first leap safely, but he had the misfortune in the second to break his leg a little above the ankle. He fell with such extraordinary violence, that the bone came through and stuck into the ground, stripping up the flesh from the fracture to the knee. When I came to the spot I was shocked at the sight. I immediately had him conveyed into a room, and we bound up his leg as well as we were able, for I had lost my surgeon: but, in spite of the care which was taken of him, a mortification ensued, and he died four days after. Shortly before his death he expressed a desire that I would see him: I did so; and he confessed to me, that the reason of his wishing to leave me was, that he was a deserter, first from the regiment of Austrasia, and afterwards from that of the Isle of France; that seeing me, as he supposed, about to take him to his corps, he hoped by running away to escape being shot. He added, that he was sensible of his crime in consenting to change his religion, and asked forgiveness of God, the king, and his captain. I was greatly affected at the fate of this poor fellow, and begged he would die in peace. I told him, that I forgave him with all my heart, and that if he had sooner confided to me his story, this cruel event should not have happened, for I would have exchanged him with an English vessel, and he would thus have been safe. In dying he had all the succours of religion, which were administered to him by a German, who was a missionary priest.

This misfortune ſerved to exaſperate me ſtill more againſt the government for encouraging deſertions; but it had not the effect of ſtopping the phrenſy which ſeemed to have taken poſſeſſion of my people. Scarcely had three days paſſed, when another of the crew went in ſearch of the governor, to aſk for a turban; and, undergoing the ſame ceremony, was in like manner taken from me. I ſent to reclaim him, and received for anſwer, that religion would not permit a Muſſulman to be delivered into the hands of a Chriſtian.

I immediately formed my reſolution. I ſent away my effects, with the proceeds of ſuch part of my cargo as was ſold. I ſent my men alſo on board, retaining only my armed boat. I then told M. de Moncriff, that, if he thought he ſhould be expoſed to any danger from the Arabs by ſtaying aſhore, I would with pleaſure take him with me, for that I was about to give theſe people a leſſon which they would probably for a long time remember. To the captain of the French brig I gave the ſame intimation, and repaired to my ſhip. Theſe preparations occupied me two days, and the governor ſuppoſed the affair to be at end; but he was miſtaken. As ſoon as I was on board, I prepared for battle; and, being ready, I ſent a boat, well armed and commanded by an officer, to ſeize upon all the Arabs that ſhould be found in the neareſt daou. My party executed faithfully their commiſſion, and brought me four men, of whom one was the captain. Of theſe, I put three in irons, and diſpatched the other to the governor, to inform him, that if my ſailor was not inſtantly given up, I would carry the three Muſſulmans in my poſſeſſion to the Iſle of France, where I would ſell them as ſlaves: at the ſame time I bent my ſails, and made every preparation for departing. The firſt ſtep of the governor was to ſeize upon my

Bannians; but it appeared by their books, that all their accompts with me were ſettled. His next ſtep was to ſend for the French agent, who eaſily convinced him, that he had no concern in the matter, and no authority over me. The governor then threatened to ſink my ſhip, but was told, that I was ſo well armed as to be able to ſilence the forts. Upon this he wiſhed to come to a parley, and an officer of the cuſtom-houſe with my two Bannians were diſpatched for the purpoſe: I received their boat with an affectation of extraordinary precaution, pretending to be in a condition to batter the whole town.

When the officer was on deck. I gave him no time for explanation, but coming directly to the point, aſked him if he had brought with him my ſailor. On his anſwering in the negative, I ordered him to be arreſted and confined in one of the cabins as a priſoner, while I ſent back the Bannians, with an aſſurance, that I would liſten to no terms till the deſerter was reſtored to me.

After waiting two hours, and receiving no intelligence, I hoiſted the top-ſails and heaved the anchor apeak. I had ſcarcely been half an hour in this ſituation before my man arrived, looking aſhamed and ill, being not yet recovered from his operation. He was accompanied by ſeveral Arabs, who entreated me with earneſtneſs to pardon him, alleging every thing in his favour which zeal for their religion could ſuggeſt. I immediately releaſed my priſoners; I alſo gave them ſome preſents, which reconciled them to me, and, before they quitted the ſhip, I had the deſerter tied to a gun, and five-and-twenty ſtrokes with a rope's end were beſtowed upon him. This leſſon was of ſervice to all: the ſailors after this would not expoſe themſelves to the riſk of being delivered up if they were to deſert,

and the governor had no wiſh on his part for a ſecond conteſt with me of this nature.

It was now ſun-ſet, and too late to go on ſhore that night; but I went the next day, accompanied by one of my officers. We were both armed, but had no attendants, not wiſhing to appear in the leaſt apprehenſive of any danger. The emir habar told me, that he was extremely glad every thing was ſettled, and that he hoped nothing of the kind would happen again. I was immediately conducted to the houſe of the governor. He was not a Sayd, but a negro of a quiet and pacific diſpoſition. He aſked me, what I would ſay, if, now that I was in his power, he in his turn were to make me a priſoner? I anſwered, that he owed it to his ſituation to conſult juſtice and not power; but ſhould he ſo far forget the former as to oblige me to repel force by force, his conduct might prove detrimental to the commerce of his country; that, beſides, I had avengers on board my veſſel, whom, in ſuch caſe, I had inſtructed how to act. I added, that I would not ſuffer myſelf to be taken alive, and would endeavour that he himſelf ſhould be the firſt victim of the ſtruggle; and I produced a brace of piſtols as I ſaid this, to convince him I was on my guard. Whether he had the magnanimity to feel himſelf above ſuch an attempt, or whether he deſpiſed my youth and raſhneſs, he ſmiled at what I ſaid, and merely obſerved, that I ought, when out of my own country, to behave with more moderation; aſſuring me at the ſame time, as to the affair in queſtion, that I ſhould hear no more of it. We parted in friendſhip, and the adventure was attended with no further conſequences.

The money of Mocha conſiſts of ſmall pieces of copper, plated or tinned, ſimilar in form and colour to the ſhilling of Holſtein, and differing from it in

nothing but the impreſſion. They are called *comaſſi*, or komaſſi, pronouncing the *k* with a ſtrong guttural accent. Sixty-four of theſe pieces are equal to a Spaniſh dollar *. The other coins moſt in uſe here are the crowns and piaſtres of Hungary: there are alſo a great number of gold pagodas and ſequins.

I have ſpoken above of a German prieſt who was accidentally at Mocha. He was a miſſionary to Abyſſinia, and had lived ſome time there in favour with the emperor. His fellow miſſionary, it ſeems, had been guilty of ſome knavery, for which he was put to death; while he had himſelf eſcaped with the baſtinado on the ſoles of his feet. I had afterwards reaſon to think, that his puniſhment was intended as a leſſon of continence. Be that as it may, he had nearly died in conſequence of it, and was a long time in regaining his health. As ſoon as he could travel, he aſked permiſſion to repair to Mocha, to complete his recovery by aid of the Europeans reſiding there. This was granted him by the emperor, who was probably glad to get rid of him: and on his arrival at Mocha the conſul admitted him into the French lodge. One day the whim ſeized him of applying himſelf to the ſtudy of medicine, and he had the vanity in a ſhort time to ſuppoſe himſelf thoroughly ſkilled in every branch of the art of healing. He therefore procured drugs, and began to preſcribe. He killed more than half his patients, while thoſe who recovered extolled him as a miracle. The ſick ran to him in crowds, and he became rich. At the time of my arrival he was in the height of his practice. He had changed his religious dreſs for a Perſian robe and turban. As I had no ſurgeon, he offered his ſervices to me in that capacity, and began by killing my carpenter,

* Bruce makes forty equal to a dollar, but he is miſtaken: Niebuhr agrees with me, and eſtimates them at ſixty-four.

whom by his skilful treatment he dispatched in less than a week. I stopped him however in his career, by refusing to confide to him any more of my crew, and left him to exercise his talents on the Arabs, whom he continued to poison.

His mission to Abyssinia had almost totally failed, and he was thinking of returning to Europe. He had acquired some knowledge both of the language and of the country, and he pretended, that it was perfectly easy to go from Coffire to the Nile, and thence down the river to Cairo. He frequently mentioned this plan to me, observing, that the essential point was to appear poor: that with this single precaution, and that of a Turkish dress, there was nothing to be feared, as such travellers who had seemingly nothing to lose were never attacked. He talked of this project so often, that I yielded to a desire of making a journey to Egypt, and visiting the pyramids. These are now indeed so well known, have been so accurately described by Savary and others, and there are such excellent models of them in the Museum of Natural History, belonging to the botanic garden at Paris, that they are as little spoken of as the Pont Neuf, or any other monument which is continually before our eyes. Yet was my curiosity strongly excited. I was desirous to examine myself these astonishing remains of antiquity, to compare them with the descriptions which had been given, to penetrate into their interior, and inspect them on all sides with the most scrupulous attention. I therefore listened to the project of the missionary, and we made the necessary arrangements for the excursion. I began by converting my money into bills of exchange upon Cairo, which were furnished me by my Bannians. I determined that my four best sailors should accompany me, and I undertook the care of them as far as Italy, promising

them on their arrival there a reward proportioned to the satisfaction I should derive from their services. I equipped both myself and them in a Persian habit, and armed each of them with a brace of pistols, a sabre, and a musket. I took myself such arms as I thought necessary, and the missionary did the same. I bargained for a daou to carry me to Cossire, the price of which was to be two hundred piastres. We agreed with the owners of the boat, to proceed in a direct line, by the help of my sailors, and not to coast it, as is usual in that country, by which means we should be able to perform the voyage at most in five or six days. The daou was brought along side my vessel, and I furnished it with lead-lines, compasses, a chart, a good telescope, and a quadrant. This done, I was on the point of setting out, when the French marine agent signified to me, that he could not suffer me to expose myself thus with an adventurer, who was engaged, for aught we knew, with a band of robbers, who might plunder me and my men, and share with him the booty. He added, that the king's subjects (the republic did not then exist), whom I was about to take with me, might be of service to his majesty; that I ought not, besides, but in a case of the greatest necessity, to quit the command with which I was entrusted; and that, in short, in his quality of marine agent, he should oppose my project. As he had over me no authority in such matters, I paid little regard to his opposition. But he contrived to render it effectual, by procuring the interference of the governor, to whom he represented me as a madman, about to plunge headlong into adventures, which would be attended with the most disastrous consequences, as well to myself and my companions, as to all those who should have any thing to do with us; that the obstinacy of my temper had been apparent in the

affair of the apoſtate ſailor, on whoſe reſtitution I had ſo peremptorily inſiſted; and he concluded by entreating him to prevent my departure. The governor ſent for me to his houſe, and after endeavouring in vain, by every means in his power, to diſſuade me from my undertaking, he laid an injunction on the boats of the country not to engage with me for that or any paſſage whatever. At the ſame time, believing me raſh enough to undertake it in my own boat, in ſpite of the dangers of the voyage, he informed me, that if I did ſo, he would take meaſures to make me, when I arrived at Coſſire, repent of my folly. I was thus under the neceſſity of relinquiſhing a plan, to which I was the more attached from having long entertained the idea of it, and which I abandoned at laſt with the utmoſt reluctance. Thus ended my ſcheme, which I now fear I ſhall never find an opportunity of executing. I returned my bills of exchange for Cairo, and reſumed the uſual courſe of my buſineſs.

The government of Mocha having formerly given cauſe of complaint to the French company, the latter ſent out a force to revenge this conduct. A body of about five hundred men were landed upon the ſmall iſland of ſand which forms the ſouthern boundary of the road, who took poſſeſſion of the fort. The ſhips which brought them anchored near the town and prepared to cannonade it. The Arabian cavalry made a ſortie on the French; but the latter had taken the precaution of planting ſome *chevaux-de-friſe*; and the Arabs, aſtoniſhed at a contrivance ſo new to them, were thrown into confuſion and routed completely. Their loſs was ſo great, that the place ſurrendered. A treaty of commerce was concluded, to which the Arabs, ſtrict obſervers of their word, have faithfully adhered. It was provided in this treaty, that the French ſhould enjoy

a free trade in Yemen, paying however the impoſts and duties which the ſovereign fixed at that time, and which have not been altered. They were alſo to have the right of riding on horſeback in the town, and the excluſive privilege of paſſing the houſe of the governor without being obliged to diſmount. This conceſſion appeared to the Arabs to be a point of the utmoſt moment, and it was not admitted till after the warmeſt debates, while they agreed without difficulty to an article of genuine importance, which permitted the French to uſe their own weights and meaſures in commercial tranſactions, diſregarding thoſe of the country. They were alſo allowed to eſtabliſh a lodge or factory in Mocha, and another in Bethelfakih, with the privilege of hoiſting their flag in thoſe places: and it was further agreed, that both at Bethelfakih and at Mocha the French articles of merchandize ſhould be exempted from being carried to the cuſtom-houſe, and ſhould be depoſited at once in the warehouſes of the lodge, where an officer of the Arabs might inſpect them. This treaty, ſo highly advantegeous to the French, has to this day been punctually obſerved. The good faith for which the Arabs are remarkable has prevented them in the ſlighteſt degree from infringing it: but it has ſerved to augment their hatred to the Chriſtians. As many of the cavalry by whom our troops were attacked were killed, the ſurviving relatives cheriſhed in conſequence a reſentment, and have been ſucceſsful in raiſing among the people the ſtrongeſt averſion to the French*. I have myſelf experienced its effects, and been often expoſed to perſonal inſults. Sometimes a number of Arabs attacked me with ſtones, and at others, bodies of Abyſſinians with ſticks. One day in particular, af-

* One of the French captains was aſſaſſinated by the relations of an Arab, who died in that engagement.

ſiſted by one of my officers, I maintained with five of the latter a moſt ludicrous battle. We had made ourſelves, I and my officer, each a large whip for the purpoſe of driving away the dogs, which followed us in crowds whenever we paſſed near their haunts. We were armed with theſe whips when ſome Abyſſinians inſulted us, and, to defend ourſelves, were forced to make uſe of them. Theſe weapons were new to our adverſaries, and the noiſe of their cracking, and two or three ſtrokes ſkilfully applied, ſent them off howling like ſo many demoniacs. This adventure obliged me once more to have recourſe to the governor, who, under pretence of protecting me, gave me one of his men, with a *bandoleer*, ordering him to accompany me every where, and ſee that I was reſpected. I was not ſo ſtupid as to be the dupe of this compliment. I knew that this ſoldier was a ſpy upon me, and was to report all my proceedings; but as there was nothing which I had the leaſt intereſt to conceal, I was indifferent upon the ſubject. I had reaſon however to rejoice at the circumſtance, for his preſence often protected me from inſults, which I muſt otherwiſe have endured.

Mocha is ſituated on a plain, reaching from the coaſt to the foot of the mountains, which is an extent of four leagues. The ſoil conſiſts of ſand, mixed with coarſe gravel and ſmall ſtones, which are chiefly fragments of granite. On the whole plain we find only a few wretched plants of caſſia, the leaves and berries of which, as ſoon as they begin to ſpring, are devoured by the camels: theſe plants excepted, the plain is as deſtitute of vegetation as the ſands of the ſhore.

Travelling over this plain is very diſagreeable both to men and cattle, as it affords no ſhelter againſt the heat of the ſun, which is burning. Wells have

been dug here and there by the Arabs, as watering-places; and near to each of these spots is a small house inhabited by people who keep the wells in repair, and furnish travellers with water at the moderate price of a komassi. These wells, with the camels, the asses, and the dress of the inhabitants, reminded me of scenes described in certain passages of the Bible, which they very much resembled.

The water in this plain is so bad as to be hardly fit to drink. As the ground lies low, the sea still filtrates through the whole extent of the plain, so that wherever we dig we are sure to find water at no great depth; but it is all so brackish, that by putting it into a hole two feet deep salt may easily be extracted from it. At first the water will sink into the sand; but, if properly supplied, the sand will soon be saturated, and the rest of the process will be effected without trouble. The saline particles contained in the sandy earth, of which this soil is composed, being separated by the water, unite and sink to the bottom of the pit, where they are soon calcined by the sun.

There is no good water in the town; all that is used is fetched from a large well at the distance nearly of half a league, where there is a considerable watering-place, constructed for the cavalry: horses, mules, asses, every morning and evening, come to this place to drink. The inhabitants are obliged to partake of this water, which is brought in leather bottles to the town on the backs either of men or asses. It is bad enough even when the bottles are old and seasoned, but when they are new it is perfectly detestable. It is unwholesome too, and frequently occasions inflammation in the bowels, a disorder which in hot climates is mortal. In proportion to the distance from the sea the water is less brackish, and in the mountains it is excellent.

Towards the ſouth of the town, nature has left a ſtrip of vegetative earth, about half a league broad, and from three to four leagues long. It is covered with date-trees, among which ſome gardens are formed, and pleaſure-houſes erected, if we may call by this name huts of ſtraw, and paltry buildings covered with palm-leaves. They however anſwer the purpoſe for which they were intended, affording a ſhelter from the injuries of the weather, and permitting the owners to enjoy the cool air, and ſmoke their hooka.

On this ſpot was the garden of the Sayd, Mohamed Abdala, the ex-governor, who had treated me with ſo much kindneſs, and I often viſited him there after he was deprived of his office. The iman, when he degraded him, laid him under a heavy contribution for the ſoldiers, who took poſſeſſion of his houſe, and loaded with inſults the very man whom two days before they had implicitly obeyed. His friends aſſiſted him in his diſtreſs, and he diſcharged the demands that were made upon him at the expenſe of nearly his whole fortune. After this event, he retired wholly to his garden, where he paſſed his days lolling on cuſhions or in the bath, ſmoking or aſleep under ſome ſhade, ſunk in the moſt complete apathy. My viſits always gave him pleaſure; I ſmoked familiarly the hooka with him, and we often fell aſleep together, reclining on our ſeparate pile of cuſhions. When I awoke an excellent pilaw was ſure to be before me, of which he in no inſtance partook, as he would never eat in my preſence. He detained me as long as he was able, never ſuffering me to go till I had merely time, by trotting my aſs faſt, to get to the town before the gates were ſhut. There was a door indeed left open for paſſengers nearly the whole night, but it was ſo extremely low, that it was neceſſary to creep upon the ground to get through, which obliged me always to return a little after ſun-ſet.

This large plantation of date-trees is the only ſpot of ground that is cultivated in the neighbourhood of Mocha. The Arabs take great care of it, water it regularly, match the different ſexes of the plants, and gather vaſt quantities of dates, exporting what they do not conſume. This is the only ſpecies of palm which I obſerved in Arabia: they have, however, the *vaquois*, though I did not ſee any; nor did I ſee any cocoa-trees.

It is with great impropriety that the name of Mocha is given to a particular kind of coffee, as there is not a plant of this ſort growing in the neighbourhood of the town: it owes its appellation ſolely to the circumſtance of being ſhipped at that port. There is in Arabia a tree called *marſh*, and another called *oſchar*, of which the wood has the ſame quality as that denominated in our colonies *round-wood*—of readily catching fire by friction.

When we have cleared the plain on which the town is ſituated, we arrive at the mountains, where is the village of Moza or Muza. The appearance of the country is here totally different. The village is in a pleaſant valley, and is ſurrounded with a perpetual verdure. The mountains ſhelter it from the tempeſtuous winds to which the town is expoſed, and the air is perfumed with the fragrance both of flowers and fruits. The inhabitants enjoy a cool ſhade under the palm, peach, badamier, and other trees with which the mountains abound. The water is excellent, and I uſed to have it brought from this place every day for my uſe: in ſhort, Moza is ſufficient of itſelf to obtain for the province of Yemen the appellation of Arabia Felix.

This country does not poſſeſs a ſingle carriage of any deſcription whatever: the uſe of wheels is unknown: every thing is carried on the backs of men, mules, aſſes, or camels. This laſt animal is a na-

tive of Arabia, and will neither thrive nor propagate any where elſe: none of thoſe which are in India breed there, or at leaſt the inſtances are rare. It is the moſt valuable of all the animals in this province, and is in every reſpect adapted by nature to live in deſerts, as it is ſingularly temperate. Its reſerve of water, by which it can live for ſeveral days without drinking, is well known. It is known too to be of the ſpecies of ruminating animals; but how long it will endure hunger, without periſhing, has perhaps never been aſcertained. I had one on board my veſſel, which did not drink during the whole paſſage from Socotara to Pondicherry, which was ſeventeen days; nor did it eat in that time more than twenty pounds of millet ſtraw. After the fourth day it ſeemed to ruminate but little, about a quarter of an hour a day, as nearly as I could obſerve. As ſoon as it was landed, it ran to a ſpring and drank plentifully; and it appeared in as good condition as if it had ſuffered no want. Though its thirſt was great, its deſire of food was by no means ſo. It ſtill ate moderately, and with no more eagerneſs than uſual. The camel is extremely indolent, unleſs harſh means are taken with it. It will often lie down upon its belly, and would continue for days together in this poſture without riſing even to eat, till almoſt famiſhed. A rope of twiſted ſtraw is put into their mouths to raiſe them from the ground. It is remarkable, that, living as it does entirely on vegetable food, the breath of this animal ſhould ſtink; but, from a putrid odour contracted in the ſtomach, it is ſo very offenſive as to be almoſt intolerable*.

Another ſingularity of this animal is its averſion to all ſorts of dirt, which is ſo great that it cannot be

* It is the ſame in almoſt all deſert countries, where cattle have nothing but plants of an alkaline or ſaline nature to live upon.

made to travel a muddy road unleſs driven by blows. Its foot is ſoft and ſure; it never makes a falſe ſtep, and never ſlips. It is ſaid, that camels are unable to run, and that dromedaries therefore are obliged to be employed in journeys that require expedition. On the contrary, I can affirm with truth, that they are extremely nimble in their paces. I have rode many of them: their trot is extremely rough but quick; they are indeed not eaſily made to gallop, but when they do, it is with a ſwiftneſs exceeding the beſt race-horſe in England. They move with ſuch vigour, that the rider could not keep his ſeat, but for a long wooden pin, that goes through the bow of the ſaddle and paſſes over his thighs, to prevent him from being jolted; without this contrivance he muſt inevitably fall the firſt inſtant of a gallop. The camel lies down on his belly to be loaded, and gets voluntarily up again when it finds itſelf burdened too heavily, or beyond the uſual weight. In the ſame manner it lies down to be mounted, and does not get up till it is told. The rider muſt be careful when it riſes to keep a firm hold, for the motion is violent, and ſeldom fails to diſmount thoſe who are not accuſtomed to it. A camel carries in general two bales of coffee, weighing ſix hundred and twenty-ſix pounds; with the pack-ſaddle and furniture the weight is full ſeven hundred: this is the extent of its burden, and is never exceeded. The camel is led by means of a ring put through its noſtrils, or one of its upper lips*. This method alone, however, is not ſufficient; for the camel is ſo ſtubborn in its temper that blows muſt be added to render it tractable.

Arabia is the country for aſſes, of which there are two ſorts; one common, like thoſe in Europe,

* The upper lip of the camel is divided, ſo that it has two.

and another more ſcarce. The latter are of the ſize of a large horſe, and are very ſtrong and ſwift: they are much uſed for riding, and are employed by the Arabs in the cavalry, and indeed on all occaſions except thoſe of ceremony. One of theſe aſſes, with his ears and tail cut, has the appearance of a handſome rat-tailed horſe: when croſſed with Arabian mares they breed the fineſt and largeſt mules in the world. They ſurpaſs the horſe in ſtrength, and are monſtrous as to ſize: the iman never ſells them for leſs than a thouſand piaſtres a-head, a price greater than that of horſes, which are ſcarcely ever valued at more than eight hundred.

The Arabs are extremely curious in antelopes, and have a very handſome ſort which they rear in their houſes. They become domeſtic, and are models of agility and gratefulneſs. They are ſo familiar as to be troubleſome. They leap in general by three ſprings, of which the ſecond is the longeſt, and all their feet riſe and come to the ground together. They are in height from thirteen to fifteen inches, and can leap ſix or ſeven feet. Their coat is grey, with a ſilvery belly; and their horns, which are ſtrait, are of a ſhining black, and never longer than two inches. Theſe animals alſo are remarkable for their temperateneſs; a quality which the penuriouſneſs of the climate certainly renders neceſſary, but which they do not loſe when removed elſewhere: it is incredible on how little nouriſhment they will ſubſiſt, and preſerve themſelves in good condition.

I mentioned above, that the Arabs have arrived at no great ſkill in the arts. Their religion, which forbids the uſe of images, deprives them both of painting and ſculpture. Their architecture is rude, and ſeems to be formed on no regular ſyſtem. Our five orders are unknown to them. Their prin-

cipal buildings have a conſiderable reſemblance to the Gothic ſtyle; at leaſt the arches of the great moſque at Mocha are Gothic; thoſe of the roof *ogee*, and ſupported by pillars which appeared to be of the ſame order.

The mode of conſtructing their houſes conſiſts in raiſing four brick walls with no plan, no deſign, and no taſte. In placing the windows not the ſmalleſt attention is paid to ſymmetry, and the walls are crowded on the inſide with little niches, which at firſt ſight a catholic would ſuppoſe were intended to contain images of ſaints, but which are made to hold the lights at night, or elſe to ſtow away goods. Their mortar is made of ſhells and coral, but it coſts them dear, as the coral is brought from a great diſtance. The roofs of their houſes are made in the *argamaſſe* manner, and are terminated by little triangular ſteps, cloſe to each other.

The navigation of the Arabs is confined to a timid coaſting along the ſhore. Their muſic is ſo barbarous as to be even a thouſand times worſe than that of the ſavages of Africa. We have ſeen what is their knowledge of medicine, in the inſtance of the miſſionary I have mentioned; and the teſtimony of Savary, Bruce, Niebuhr, and Volney, confirms my aſſertions.

They are altogether ignorant of mechanics, and have no wheel carriage of any kind; every thing is done by the mere ſtrength of the arms; even a cart is not known among them. Their plough is a wretched inſtrument without wheels, the ſhare of which works nearly like ours, but the toil is great both for the cattle and men. The cultivation of the land in almoſt all its branches is a buſineſs of bodily labour. By means of a plank, with a rope faſtened at each end, they heap up the earth, and make little banks of it, to retain the water, as in the fields

prepared for rice; they then break up the ground either with their ploughs or with pick-axes, the ſower following cloſe to the labourer, and ſcattering the ſeed, which the latter, as he returns, treads in with his feet. In ſpite of ſo imperfect a method they have excellent crops. The wheat in the worſt ſoil yields ten for one, in the ordinary twenty-five or thirty, and in the beſt, in ſome places, fifty, particularly among the mountains. The millet is ſtill more productive, and affords even a hundred and fifty for one; a proportion that is almoſt incredible.

While many arts are wholly unknown in this country, others are in their infancy. But with literature and the ſciences it is different. The excellence of their poetry is well known; and as for the ſciences, the Arabs are as well ſkilled in geometry and aſtronomy as it is poſſible to be without the aid of inſtruments, or with the imperfect ones they poſſeſs. Their genius is particularly adapted to numerical operations; they are good arithmeticians, and play well at cheſs. This game drew many of them to my houſe, of whom one in particular was ſo expert that he beat us all, and for that reaſon was called *ſap-mate*, and at laſt known by no other appellation: his friends grew ſo accuſtomed to it, and uſed it ſo conſtantly, that it remained with him. *Sap* is a Mooriſh word of diſtinction, anſwering to *ſir*: to expreſs reſpect to a woman, they ſay *bibi-ſap*.

Horned cattle are ſo ſcarce in Arabia that there are very few killed; and as a want of the fleſh of theſe animals often prevails at Mocha, camels' fleſh is ſubſtituted in its ſtead, which the butchers ſell in the ſhambles like beef. This meat is agreeable and nouriſhing, but rather reſembles veal than beef. The ſoup made of it is excellent; I was ſo extreme-

ly fond of it, that I never complained when my landlord apologized for being able to procure me no other.

Fiſh is the principal diſh in places near the ſhore; it is in general plentiful and good, and of the ſame kind as ours: there are no fiſh, nor any birds, of paſſage. I ſaw neither ſtorks nor ſwallows. Storks however were ſeen by Niebuhr at Moſul. There are quails, but they are ſtationary. The *ſamargog* or locuſt-eater is found here: I met myſelf with none of theſe birds; but, from the deſcription which was given me, I ſuppoſe them to be of the ſpecies of blackbird, known in the Iſle of France by the name of *martin*.

The fruit-market here is perhaps the moſt extraordinary in the world. Nature has done every thing for this country; and when we conſider the numberleſs advantages ſhe has beſtowed upon it, the ſtrength, the talents, and courage of its inhabitants, it is difficult to account for their not having become the greateſt nation on earth; unleſs we ſuppoſe, that, poſſeſſing in themſelves every thing to be wiſhed for, they have never attempted the conqueſt of countries that offered no attractions, and did not enjoy half the advantages with which their own country abounded. Arabia produces every thing. I have ſeen the market-place filled with apples and oranges, plums and citrons, apricots and pines, peaches and bananas, bretts and artichokes, grapes and mangoes; in ſhort, with all the fruits and vegetables of Europe and Aſia: but the heat is ſo exceſſive, that annual fruits ripen too quickly, have little juice, and decay in a fortnight: thoſe of the evergreen-trees, on the contrary, ſucceed well; and the fruits of Aſia are accordingly in this part of the world much ſuperior to thoſe of Europe.

Their religion prohibiting the uſe of fermented

liquors, the Arabs make no wine, nor even extract any liquor from the date, which would ſupply it, as well as the cocoa-nut; but they dry a great quantity of grapes, from which a drink peculiar to the country is made, and which is tolerably pleaſant. For want of other wine I was obliged to make uſe of it. It is produced thus:—thirty pounds of dried raiſins are put into a hogſhead of water, and left for three days to ferment, when the liquor is racked off and put into bottles. It very much reſembles champagne. The Arabs partake of it in ſpite of the koran, every one having an opportunity of making it privately in his own houſe, and I was often aſked in ſecret to drink with them. Their fondneſs for brandy alſo is but little checked by the prohibitory commandment, the great reſort of foreigners to Mocha rendering them leſs ſcrupulous there in points of religion. They often indulge their inclination; and though they do not ſuppoſe Mahomet to be blind, will drink it with delight, when they are certain of not being obſerved by their countrymen. It was perhaps to their love of ſtrong liquors, more than to any thing elſe, that I was indebted for my acquaintance with many of the moſt diſtinguiſhed perſons in the cavalry, who viſited me with the hope of ſecretly indulging their paſſion. The Jews make ſome arrack from rice, but it is ſo badly diſtilled, that none but negroes or ſailors can drink it. The Arabs, independently of the dictates of religion, wholly abſtain from it; ſo that the conſumption of this liquor is extremely moderate.

Millet is the grain which is cultivated by preference in the province of Yemen, where there is little barley and ſtill leſs wheat. The millet grows amazingly ſtrong; the ear, which is ſeldom leſs than five inches long, and an inch thick, is abundantly loaded, yielding, as I obſerved before, in the proportion

of a hundred and fifty for one: the ſtalks altogether are ſometimes from five to ſix feet high. The ſtraw is very valuable, ſerving as food for the aſſes and camels. As there is no hay for the horſes, the tendereſt end of the millet ſtalks, with the grain in the ear, is given them: this ſerves alſo, with a ſmall portion of barley or beans, inſtead of oats.

The Arabs make little or no bread; but conſume, like the Indians, a great quantity of rice. Their uſual delicacy is the pilaw. This is made by putting a fowl into an earthen pan, with about three pounds of rice, and juſt enough water to keep it from burning; the whole is left to ſtew for ſix-and-thirty hours, a quantity of ſpice, ſuch as cardamoms, cloves, and nutmegs, being added: the gravy of the fowl moiſtens the rice, and makes it delicious. The ſmell of a good pilaw, if uncovered on the fire, would ſcent a whole houſe.

The interior part of the country ſo abounds with roſe-trees, that a vaſt quantity both of roſe-water and oil of roſes is made, and is exported to every part of the globe. The Arabs are very fond of this perfume, and uſe a great deal of it. The oil in particular is ſo ſtrong, that a ſingle drop poured into a cheſt will give it a ſcent which nothing can overcome: a box alſo, in which a bottle of this perfume has been kept, will retain the ſmell as long as a fragment of it remains; and if the hand by accident or otherwiſe ſhould touch it, a perſpiration of three days' continuance will ſcarcely ſuffice to take off the odour.

A great deal of ſalt is made on the ſhore of the ſea: but the Arabs do not, as is done in Europe, divide a plain covered with water into compartments. They make a number of uniform holes about four and ſometimes five feet wide, and two feet deep, which they fill with ſea-water till the

ground is ſoaked, ſo as to abſorb no more. A red cruſt then forms itſelf on the ſurface: the water, which is alſo red, is afterwards drained off, and the ſediment expoſed to the ſun, which gives it a beautiful whiteneſs. The ſalt of Mocha is the fineſt I have any where ſeen.

The lovers of ſhell-work would find ample room for gratifying their taſte on the ſhores of Arabia, where, as to theſe objects, curioſity has not yet roamed, and where there are ſhells therefore in abundance. The moſt common are the olive, the pilgrim, and Bernard the hermit. There are ſome in high preſervation both as to form and poliſh.

The principal object of cultivation in Yemen is coffee. This tree is too well known to require a deſcription. It is a native of Arabia, and though it has thriven ſurpriſingly in the Antilles, at Cayenne, and in the Iſle of Bourbon, it has preſerved in its original country a ſuperiority that gives it a preference in all the markets of Europe. The fruit, when ſtripped of its ſkin, is commonly ſmall and round: it is of a green colour, and has a ſtrong ſcent. There is another ſort growing in the neighbourhood of Ouden, that is black and full of ſmall ſhining particles like cloves. This has a ſtrong as well as greaſy taſte, and the infuſion made from it is extremely oily. So powerful indeed is its odour, and ſo ſharp its taſte, that it cannot be uſed by itſelf; but when mixed with the other, it is very agreeable. The uſual proportion is one pound to ſix: it is thus that the company's agent mixes it.

The coffee is all carried to Bethelfakih, a ſmall town about five-and-twenty leagues north-weſt of Mocha, where the general market is held. The French have a lodge there, and are allowed to uſe the ſtandard weights of France. The annual period for the market is the beginning of May, that the

veſſels, which load at Mocha, may begin their voyage early in June, when the monſoon changes. The coffee intended to be ſhipped is conveyed to Mocha on camels. The exportation ſeldom amounts to four thouſand bales a year, except when the Engliſh and French companies have made expeditions there; but theſe occaſions happening ſeldom, the exportation may be taken at an average of from three thouſand five hundred to four thouſand bales. A bale weighs three hundred and thirteen pounds, of which the thirteen pounds are allowed for the packing. The common market-price of a bale is forty-two Spaniſh piaſtres, the duties at Bethelfakih and Mocha, with the expenſe of carriage to the latter place, included; which is at the rate of about fourteen pence halfpenny per pound. By this calculation the trade of Mocha will amount, in the article of coffee, to twelve hundred thouſand weight, producing a ſum of a hundred and ſixty-eight thouſand piaſtres. As the Arabs have recourſe to foreign countries for many articles of neceſſity, the balance of trade would be very much againſt them, if their receipts were confined to a ſmall ſum; but the exports from Mocha are of ſo little impotance to them as hardly to draw the attention of the government. The Perſians flock to the market of Bethelfakih, and form there the caravan of Baſſora. The coffee, which is diſtributed through Natolia, Turkey in Europe, and part of Ruſſia, goes by the way of Smyrna, and joins the caravan of that name, while that which is intended for the coaſt of Barbary, and for Africa in general, joins the caravan of Cairo. Theſe three caravans are the principal ſupport of the market of Bethelfakih. The purchaſes are all made in money, which introduces annually into the province of Yemen a ſum greater than it expends in ſuch articles of conſumption as it is obliged to import.

Beſides coffee, Arabia ſupplies other nations with great quantities of fruits, ſuch as pears, apples, raiſins, figs, peaches, and dried dates, as well as with caſſia, cardamoms, and *aſſa-fœtida*, which are all productions of its own ſoil, but of which the value may be conſidered as trifling in the balance of trade. Its markets furniſh likewiſe incenſe, benzoin, aloes, and gum. Theſe laſt articles, however, are not of its own growth, though the principal market is there, for Arabia itſelf produces but a very ſmall quantity of them. The aloes come from Socotara, which furniſhes the beſt that are known. This commodity is not confined to any particular market, but may be had equally at Mocha, Muſcat, Jeddo, and the other towns of Arabia.

Yemen has its gum chiefly from Abyſſinia, for it does not produce itſelf the twentieth part of what is ſold in its markets. It is therefore by no means proper to ſay Mocha coffee, and gum-arabic. The gum-tree of Arabia is a little, ſhort, ſtunted plant, and the drops of gum which it yields are ſmall and yellowiſh. The Abyſſinian gum-tree, on the contrary, is large and flouriſhing, and produces drops in abundance, as large as a pigeon's egg, and as tranſparent as cryſtal. The market of Mocha and the places near it ſcarcely furniſh three hundred bales of this article annually. As for the incenſe and benzoin, they form together but an inconſiderable branch of commerce. The Arabs conſume indeed great quantities of them, but they are chiefly ſupplied by the Abyſſinians; and I think it a juſt calculation to eſtimate the profit upon what they ſell to ſtrangers, as only equivalent to the ſum they pay for what they get from Abyſſinia; ſo that the ſtate derives from theſe articles no advantage.

The ſums which this province receives for the productions I have mentioned ſerve to pay for the

rice which it obtains from India, the ſugar from different places, the ſugar-candy from Bengal in particular, the iron and cannon from Europe, the cloths and wrought gold by the ports of the Levant, the pepper and different ſpecies from the coaſt of Malabar, the cotton manufactures of every kind from India, ſilks from Surat, and porcelain and other articles from China.

Though the wants of this country are ſo extenſive, the balance of trade is ſtill in its favour. This will be evident if we conſider, that all the buſineſs is done by ready money; for though the country poſſeſſes no coin of its own, except a ſmall kind called komaſſi, of which I have ſpoken, and which cannot be exported on account of its trivial value, yet it abounds with foreign money of every ſort, and particularly European, ſuch as the crown-pieces and ſequins of Hungary, which ſerve for all commercial tranſactions however conſiderable. The komaſſis are uſed only in inferior concerns, that the coins I have mentioned may remain in circulation in Arabia. The amount of its ſales therefore muſt neceſſarily exceed that of its purchaſes, for the latter would otherwiſe leave no reſidue of foreign money; and Arabia muſt undoubtedly be conſidered as a rich country, ſince its productions exceed its wants.

The manners of the Arabs are mild. The cuſtom of living alone in their ſeraglios, and conſequently of having but little intercourſe with each other, their plurality of wives, by which they are enabled to gratify a propenſity which the climate creates, and the ſtate of ſubjection, or rather ſlavery in which the ſex is held, are circumſtances unfavourable to licentiouſneſs: while, at the ſame time, the precept enjoining abſtinence from ſtrong liquors being ſtrictly obſerved, except in thoſe places where the luxury introduced by commerce leads to a neg-

lect of the moſt important duties, their ignorance of all games of chance, and above all their enthuſiaſm for their religion, and the deſpotic influence which its miniſters poſſeſs, contribute to preſerve the purity of their morals. The contempt alſo which they entertain for foreigners prevents their inviting them to their houſes, or having any communication with them. An Arab knows nobody but his family: he faithfully obſerves the laws of the koran, and the employment of every hour of the day is determined by a precept. The duties of devotion, ablutions, and the concerns of his houſe, uniformly occupy his time, and his life paſſes away in a regularity that preſerves his manners from corruption. The children, brought up under the eye of their father, and perverted by no intercourſe with ſtrangers, adopt the ſame ſyſtem of conduct, and ſeldom or never depart from it.

The government is avaricious, but the people individually are not ſo. This fatal paſſion, which every where elſe is the parent of ſo many vices, has not yet found acceſs with the Arabs. The heat of the climate renders their wants few in the article of clothing, and their habitual temperance preſcribes the ſame moderation in their living. In peaceful indolence in the midſt of his mountains, the Arab has nothing to wiſh for: he is happy in the benefits which nature has beſtowed upon him, and does not ſigh for thoſe of which he is ignorant, and which foreigners can never make known to him in his ſolitude. His higheſt pleaſure is to have nothing to do. To ſleep in a cool ſituation, to throw himſelf upon piles of cuſhions, to imbibe the free air, ſmoke his hooka, bathe frequently, as well from devotion as inclination, and enjoy the ſociety of his women, conſtitute the ſummit of his felicity, and of any above this he has no conception. At the ſame time

that these enjoyments satisfy him, he knows how to value them, and admits in his pleasures of no partner: hence that jealousy which forms so principal a part of his character.

If any thing could introduce a relaxation of manners among the Arabs, it would be their mode of living with their women: the burning heat of the climate, affecting their external senses, acts as a perpetual stimulus to their desires, to which they give themselves up with the less reserve from possessing so amply the means of satisfying them. It was with the view probably of moderating the violence of these feelings, that frequent bathings were prescribed by their religion; but, instead of producing that effect, nothing so much tends to augment them, as the abuse which is made of this practice. The places provided for the purpose are in general from five-and-twenty to thirty feet square, and about three feet and a half in depth, with little steps at the corners to go down. The bottom is sand, or gravel beaten firm, and is always smooth. The master of the family and his women all bathe there together. Over every thing in this picture that may be deemed obscene, I shall draw a veil: it may, however, easily be conceived, that the sight of so many females, with no covering but a transparent water, must necessarily add to the effects produced by the natural heat of the climate.

In this point of view the manners of the Arabs may be said perhaps to be somewhat licentious; but the legislator, subject probably to the same wants himself, justly conceiving the impossibility of repressing desires so violent, and the danger of attempting it by a precept, has imposed no restriction. Accordingly, the voluptuous Arab may freely abandon himself to the empire of sensual pleasure in the privacy of his seraglio, without being judged depraved

in his manners; for in doing ſo, he violates no law, and deviates from no duty.

The women in Arabia are never expoſed to view, even when they travel, though carriages are not in uſe there. To ſcreen them from public obſervation, a large packſaddle is placed upon the back of a camel, having four upright poſts, with cloth, faſtened to it, and a roof in the manner of a canopy. The woman who travels is ſhut up in this kind of cage, and performs the intended journey without enjoying a ſingle view of the country through which ſhe is paſſing. To lift up a corner of the covering which conceals her, would often endanger her life: this depends however upon the character of the huſband or maſter.

In conſequence of this ſecluſion of the women, debauchery is unknown even in thoſe towns where the manners have been moſt relaxed by luxury. There are no women of pleaſure at Mocha, which is often, by the European ſailors, deemed a great hardſhip. One female only, who ſold baſkets, was thought not to be very cruel to her ſuitors; but the laws of the country are terrible againſt the man who ſhould be caught in ſo flagitious an act: if the government were to come to the knowledge of it, the offender muſt take the turban, or he would be put to death. In ſuch moments of dalliance if the woman were deſirous of betraying her lover, ſhe has only to call out, and, if obſerved by a ſingle witneſs, the European would be ſeized, and could ſave his life only by embracing Mahometaniſm. In addition to this perfidy, were ſhe to ſwear, that, to obtain his purpoſe, he had cried *Alla*, the crime would be ſtill heavier, and a refuſal to take the turban would conduct him without further examination to the puniſhment of impaling.

Theſe laws are ſo well known, that the Europe-

ans are on their guard; and the Arabs on their part having no need of such women, the purity of their manners is preserved. From its still possessing a religion and manners, this nation may be regarded as in its infancy. By religion I do not mean a form of worship, which in reality every nation observes, but which is very different from religion. By having a religion, whatever may be its nature, I mean the firm conviction of the mind as to the truth of its doctrines, the strict observance of its precepts, the persuasion that it is of divine origin, that it cannot err, and the being ready, if necessary, to die for its sake. In this sense we certainly have no longer a religion in Europe. A form of worship, on the contrary, is merely the professed observance of certain exterior practices, which are often dispensed with on the most frivolous pretences, or discharged with a carelessness, which is made subservient to luxury and fashion. We have long had nothing but forms of worship in the part of the world we inhabit.

Arabia must be considered as more distant than any other country from a revolution, because, while she preserves her religion and manners, she stands in no need of a general reformation. The greatest misfortune a country can sustain is to lose these; and in the history of the world we shall find, that, after religion and manners have been annihilated, a nation could never be regenerated, without a period of barbarism, throwing every thing into a chaos out of which more enlightened times would gradually arise. The arts and sciences are then re-produced, and the people raised to the height of civilization, when they again degrade themselves. The sciences, which were first cultivated in India, afterwards escaped to Egypt, and thence to Greece, whence they passed into Italy, which has lost them in her

turn, while France has obtained the prize: they now ſeem to be taking their courſe towards the north, which ſcarcely poſſeſſed the ſlighteſt degree of civilization when the ſouth was moſt flouriſhing. They will thus return perhaps again to their primitive country. Hiſtory ſhows us, that the ſucceſſion of barbariſm to more enlightened times, in the countries which we have juſt named, only compelled the arts and ſciences to make the tour of the globe; and, in inquiring into the cauſes of their decline, we are obliged to admit, that the revolutions which overturn ſtates are brought about ſolely by the extinction of religion and morals.

In the enjoyment of a happier deſtiny, Arabia, inſtead of apprehenſions of revolution, ſees the period approaching when ſhe will occupy in her turn the foremoſt place among the nations of the earth. Her attachment to her religion ſubſiſts in all its force; her morals are uncontaminated; ſhe knows neither debauchery, gaming, luxury, nor avarice, and is perhaps the only country in exiſtence where virtue is practiſed for its own ſake.

The ſtrictneſs of manners of the Arabs muſt neceſſarily influence the national character: accordingly no people are more frank, open, and ſincere: even the wandering tribes are never known to break their word. The Arab gives no note nor written obligation; neither bond nor ſecurity is neceſſary to bind him to the performance of what he has promiſed. Two merchants conclude a bargain without ſpeaking a word; the one touches the hand of the other, and a third ſpreads a carpet over them; the touching of hands determines the price that is agreed upon, and nothing can break an engagement entered into in this manner. If ſeveral deal together they ſit down in a circle; the ſeller ſets his price by ſqueezing the hand of his neighbour on his

right ſide a certain number of times; and ſuch as intend to offer a greater or leſs price for the goods, augment or diminiſh the number of theſe tokens accordingly. The perſon on the left of the ſeller ſignifies the price which has thus come round to him; he who firſt gave it makes himſelf known, the buyer and ſeller give each other the hand which a third party ſeparates with a ſlight blow, and the bargain is ſo firmly concluded, that it cannot be broken. I have witneſſed tranſactions of this nature. It is an eſtabliſhed rule, that a veſſel ſhall not diſpoſe of any of her goods without giving notice to the body of merchants, who are entitled to the preference: the owner is obliged to reſign at leaſt a part of his cargo, if he does not ſell it all to them, before he diſpoſes of it partially. On ſuch occaſions they aſſemble together and treat in ſilence, the hand under the carpet: the bargain is concluded without any diſpute, any ill-will, and without even a word being ſpoken, and the engagement is irrevocable.

Such good faith and honeſty ought to confound our Europeans, who deem themſelves ſuperior to all other nations, yet can ſettle no buſineſs, however trivial, without guarding againſt the poſſibility of mutual fraud, by a multitude of forms, dictated by miſtruſt, and which are often inſufficient to protect the creditor from the diſhoneſt practiſes of the debtor.

The Arab is paſſionate and vindictive. Nothing can ſtifle his deſire of revenge: he will readily ſacrifice himſelf, if he can involve his enemy in his deſtruction; but this thirſt for vengeance never leads him to employ means that are treacherous. He is brave, and does not conceal his deſigns. The violence of his paſſions renders him peculiarly ſuſceptible of enthuſiaſm; and the Arabs have given

proofs of what they will do for their religion. In friendſhip they are firm, generous, and capable of the moſt perfect devotion. Hoſpitality is one of their moſt inviolable duties; whatever may be the crime of him who begs an aſylum, he is ſacred to his hoſt, who protects him as long as he is under his roof, and, though it were his bittereſt enemy, would defer his revenge till he had quitted his houſe.

The Arabs are proud, conceited, and ſeldom of a prepoſſeſſing deportment: they have beſides a moſt ſovereign contempt for all other nations. The converts to Mahometaniſm are never treated by them with any diſtinguiſhed reſpect, of whatever utility they may be to them. They not merely deſpiſe foreigners, they perfectly deteſt them; and the common people frequently load them with abuſe and other ill uſage: but here, as every where elſe, the better ſort are diſtinguiſhed by a decency and dignity of behaviour. The higher ranks are in general extremely grave. The ruling paſſion of the whole nation is jealouſy. Every man is capable of ſacrificing his wife on the ſlighteſt ſuſpicion: his fury would not ſtop there; he would not be deterred by any difficulty or diſtance, but would follow his rival to the end of the world to ſtab him. This diſpoſition renders them extremely vigilant in whatever relates to their ſeraglios, from which every perſon is indiſcriminately excluded. Even their own children, after they attain the age of puberty, are not admitted.

The iman of Yemen reſides at Sana, a town about forty leagues north-north-eaſt of Mocha. His court is far from being ſo brilliant as it might be, if he would encourage the Sayds about his perſon; but whether he fears them, or diſlikes their preſence, he keeps them at a diſtance, and is ſurround-

ed only by blacks, who are in entire submission to his will. There are very few Arabs of distinguished family at Sana, and the town itself is but little superior to Mocha. Its fortifications, like those of the other towns, consists merely of brick walls, flanked by huge towers without a ditch: there is not indeed a single intrenchment in the whole kingdom.

The throne of Yemen, has been frequently stained with blood, and from these occasions a sort of constitution arose, by which the power of the iman was in some degree abridged; but, though not considered as sovereignly despotic, he becomes so by the manner in which he contrives to have his council composed, without whose advice he can undertake nothing. He thus eludes the restrictions which the constitution has imposed upon his personal authority, and is in reality absolute over the lives of his subjects. The present reigning monarch has not sullied the period of his reign by any atrocious executions, and is not charged with having put a single individual to death in an arbitrary way. He readily admits Europeans to visit him, but they never do it without carrying presents. When a European arrives at his court, the iman defrays the expenses of his coming, his stay, and his return. Among the presents intended for the sovereign, care must be taken that there is no article of sculpture or embroidery representing the figures of men or animals: every kind of image is so strictly prohibited by law, that nothing of this nature would be accepted. The presents may consist of pieces of green or red velvet, lawn embroidered with gold, jewels, a poignard mounted with precious stones, clocks, watches, and arms. In return, he generally gives the choice of a horse from his stables. Considering the extent of his dominions, he keeps his army at a strong peace establish-

ment. It may amount to two thouſand cavalry, compoſed of the flower of the nation, and ſix or ſeven thouſand indifferent infantry, which I have already deſcribed. In war he can augment his forces, cavalry and infantry, to twenty thouſand and upwards. There is beſides a corps of about ſix hundred artillery of different nations, to manage at leaſt as many pieces of cannon of all ſizes, of which not more than twenty are mounted, and theſe are upon naval carriages, in bad condition, and are drawn by men. The reſt being diſmounted are of no uſe. I am ſpeaking of field-pieces, for thoſe belonging to the fortifications are mounted upon two blocks of wood, which ſerve as a carriage. Their infantry and artillery are ſo wretched, that three thouſand good European troops, with ten pieces of flying artillery, might effect the conqueſt of Yemen in three months.

Arabia without doubt can boaſt of having been peopled at as remote a period as any part of the globe. The high mountains of granite prove the antiquity of the country. At the firſt view of it in a map it appears to have been an iſland in the primitive ages of the world, before the exiſtence of the Iſthmus of Suez, and when the Perſian Gulf joined the Caſpian Sea. Since that time its extent has continually increaſed; and in the lapſe of ſome centuries, the Straits of Babelmandel will probably be a ſecond point of contact between Africa and Aſia. There is already but ſeven fathom water between the Iſthmus of Mehun or Perim *, which is the uſual paſſage of veſſels. There is a depth indeed of four-and-twenty fathoms in the wider paſſage, but this depth is confined to the middle only, and is found no where elſe; in many parts, the ſands and

* This iſland ſtands at the diſtance of a ſhort league from Cape Babelmandel, and forms the ſtraits of that name.

the high bottoms prevent large veſſels from paſſing. The Red Sea is deeper than the narrow ſtrait, and is almoſt every where, between the iſlands and rocks which it contains, thirty or forty fathom. Many parts of it are even ſaid to he unfathomable; but this muſt be owing to the imperfection of the lines uſed in ſounding; and, I am perſuaded, that hereafter it will be a large lake like the Caſpian Sea, when time ſhall have ſhut up the ſtrait. The Red Sea has in general been very incorrectly ſounded: in tacking between Mocha and the coaſt of Africa, I have found conſtantly from ſeventy to eighty fathom. M. de Roſily, commander of the king's frigate Meduſa, is the only perſon who would have been able to give accurate ſoundings of theſe parts, if the urgency of the ſervice in which he was employed had allowed him to confine his attention to this object. But he was often obliged to ſound when ſailing before the wind, for the winds and tides are ſo violent in theſe latitudes, that if he had ſtood acroſs to do ſo, every time of heaving the lead would have coſt him as much diſtance as he could have gained in ſix hours. This method obliged him to uſe a very ſhort line, ſo that he ſeldom let out more than fifty fathom, which were not ſufficient to reach the bottom. This is not the caſe however with his obſervations, which are made with all the accuracy and juſtneſs which his abilities were capable of, and are therefore perfect in every reſpect. This excellent officer has lately publiſhed a chart of the Red Sea from the ſtraits to the Iſthmus of Suez. His aſtronomical obſervations were made with a chronometer, regulated on the meridian of Mahé; and from the care he has beſtowed upon the ſubject, and his zeal and knowledge united, the greateſt confidence may be placed in the correctneſs of the poſitions which he lays

down. This chart is eſſentially neceſſary in navigation : thoſe of former travellers are too defective in preciſion to be depended upon : one was wanted from a mariner poſſeſſing the ſkill of M. de Roſily. Both the public and government owe him on this account a juſt tribute of acknowledgment.

The ſea is viſibly retiring from the plain on which Mocha is built. All along the coaſt of the Red Sea, from the entrance of the ſtraits, the ſpace from the ſhore to the foot of the mountains of Arabia is daily increaſing in extent, and ſubmerging from the ocean : it is not yet covered with vegetative earth, and the ſea appears to have left it but yeſterday. In many places we ſeem to be on ſand juſt abandoned, and almoſt fear the return of the tide. It is not thus beyond the ſtraits, on the ſide of Aden, where the waves bathe the foot of the mountains, while the baſe upon which they ſtand is ſtill in the abyſs. At a very ſhort diſtance the depth cannot be fathomed, except near Cape Saint Anthony, from which it decreaſes gradually to the ſtraits.

In attempting to calculate the ages that might elapſe before the ocean will have quitted the coaſt of Arabia oppoſite Aden, the powers of the mind would be loſt : while, as to the Red Sea, its water is ſo ſhallow, the iſlands and ſand-banks with which it abounds are ſo evidently the tops of hills that are ſlowly appearing, and its retreat is ſo viſible, that we cannot refuſe to anticipate in imagination a period at which this vaſt gulf will be converted into a valley. It is even poſſible, that this change may be accelerated by ſome volcanic exploſion. The enormous maſs which conſtitutes the mountains of Arabia reſts upon no ſolid baſis. An internal conflagration has excavated beneath their foundations immenſe caverns, which, paſſing under the bed of the Red Sea, communicate with Africa.

The little iſland of Gebelthor ſtill burns and ſmokes, from the effects of theſe volcanic proceſſes.

Zeila and Mocha, two towns on oppoſite coaſts, are built upon correſpondent ſubmarine veins of this deſcription. The pyrites contained within them continually burn, and have ſet fire to the combuſtible ſubſtances that have been placed near them. When one of theſe towns experiences a ſhock, the other feels it at the ſame inſtant. During my reſidence in Arabia, there were ſeveral earthquakes, of which ſome were violent. On one of theſe occaſions, a little town in the mountains, ſix leagues to the eaſt of Mocha, was completely overthrown. The ſhocks were felt at Mocha; and though not very ſtrong, they were ſufficiently ſo to make me apprehend, that the houſe in which I lived would tumble upon my head. I accordingly quitted it in haſte: the land when I got out was firm, but my boat, which was at anchor on the water's edge, was ſtill in vibration, and for a moment two or three ſtrong waves were raiſed, though it was a profound calm. Fahrenheit's thermometer was at 100, and the barometers at 27. If we may judge of the depth of the ſubterraneous abyſs under the foundations of Arabia by its effects, we muſt ſuppoſe it to be enormous; for enormous muſt be the conflagration neceſſary to produce an exploſion capable of moving ſuch vaſt maſſes. Earthquakes are of frequent occurrence in the mountains, particularly in the neighbourhood of Aden. The internal fire appears to be general, as it has not yet ſettled at any focus; it is probable, however, that it will in time make itſelf a paſſage by opening a volcano, which will give vent to the exploſions, and thus put the other parts of the country into ſafety. At preſent theſe are all in continual danger of being ſwallowed up in ſome of the ſubterraneous caverns, the vaults of which, in-

creaſing the fire by confining it, may at laſt be unable to reſiſt its force. This country indeed has always been ſubject to the effects of an internal conflagration, which appears to have produced in it great revolutions. A whole group of iſlands, anciently ſo famous that we know even the names of the towns in the largeſt of them, has totally diſappeared. I refer to the iſlands which bore the name of Panchaia.

Diodorus * ſays, that the Iſland of Panchaia was ſituated to the ſouth of Arabia Felix, that there was a temple of Jupiter there, of which he gives a magnificent deſcription, and four towns, Hiracia, Dalis, Oceanis, and Panara. The exiſtence of the latter is ſo well confirmed, that we know its inhabitants to have conſiſted of Indians, Scythians, and even Cretans: theſe towns are no where to be found. Even ſuppoſing Socotara to have been one of them, what can have become of the reſt? They cannot have been united to the continent by the retreat of the ſea. There are two reaſons that militate againſt this ſuppoſition. For, in the firſt place, were this the caſe, there would undoubtedly be ſome remains of that celebrated temple mentioned by Evemerus, which covered two acres of ground, and was built with free-ſtone, of a whiteneſs and poliſh equal to marble; we ſhould certainly ſee ſomething of the navigable river ſo near its ſource; we ſhould find traces of the four towns which Diodorus has mentioned by name. There is indeed on the coaſt of Africa the town of Zeila, at the extremity of the gulf ſo called; but neither its name nor its ſituation gives any mark of its being one of thoſe belonging to the Iſland of Panchaia. But even ſuppoſing it to be one of them, the queſtion reſpecting the oth-

* Diod. Bibliot Hiſt. lib. 5. et lib. 6, Preſerved by Euſebius. Præpar. Evang. lib. 2.

er is ſtill undetermined; and theſe are monuments which could not have decayed, without leaving ſome ruins to atteſt their exiſtence. Evemerus ſays, that the temple of Jupiter was ſituated upon a hill. Suppoſing therefore the towns to have been buried in the ſands of Africa, the ſituation of the temple and the hill would ſurely preſerve them from a ſimilar fate.

The ſecond reaſon againſt conſidering theſe iſlands as having become a conſtituent part of the continent, is drawn from the principles of hydroſtatics. The Iſthmus of Suez had certainly emerged from the ocean before the Iſland of Panchaia had diſappeared, for Evemerus was acquainted with it, and this author was contemporary with the ſecond ſucceſs of Alexander. However ſhallow might be the ſtrait which ſeparated this iſland from the continent, it is evident, that the plains which form the bottom of it were of a much lower level than the ground which compoſed the iſthmus, ſince the latter was dry when the former was overflowed. Now it is known that the iſthmus is the loweſt land, the leaſt elevated above the ſurface of the ſea, of any in this part of the globe. From the ſtraits of Babelmandel to Cape Gardafuy the coaſt of Africa is compoſed of ſandy downs, which lie extremely high; the coaſt towards the ſouth is alſo high enough to to ſee from it to the diſtance of five leagues without difficulty; which is a much greater elevation than that of the iſthmus, and proves therefore a prior exiſtence. If the Iſland of Panchaia had been united to the continent, the ſtructure of the country makes it evident that ſuch union could only have taken place in theſe latitudes: which leads me to a reflexion upon the text. Diodorus ſays, that this iſland was ſituated to the ſouth of Arabia Felix. Why has he not aſſigned its place to the north of Africa, which would have bordered upon it? It would ſeem

natural, that he ſhould name the continent which was the leaſt diſtant. Conſidering this to be the ſenſe of the paſſage, we muſt ſuppoſe, that the iſland was nearer to the coaſt of Arabia than to that of Africa. If ſuch be the poſition which he meant to give it, every idea of its having been united to the continent muſt vaniſh, ſince a mere inſpection of the coaſts will manifeſt the phyſical impoſſibility of ſuch an event. We do not find there a ſingle plain; we find nothing indeed but high mountains, the feet of which are buried in the waves to an unfathomable depth. In what place then could the junction have been effected?

The ſyſtem of the retreat of the ſea defies the moſt inveterate ſcepticiſm; but, when treated with too much warmth of imagination, it may give birth to paradoxes without number. In the labyrinth of inquiries into which it may lead us, let us never loſe the clue of hydroſtatics, which alone will keep us clear of the errors conſtantly reſulting from a ſpirit of ſyſtematizing. When it is proved, that it is one of the eſſential properties of fluids to preſerve themſelves in a ſtate of equilibrium, it neceſſarily follows, that the ocean cannot have retired from one part of the globe, at the ſame time that another part which is higher, that is to ſay, more diſtant from the centre, is overwhelmed by it. It is in vain then that a philoſophy, reſpectable in other points, would perſuade us, that, when the firſt Hanno made the tour of Africa, half of this vaſt continent was under water, and eſpecially the Cape of Good Hope. In vain would it aſſure us, that at that time no part of America exiſted but the tops of the mountains: ſuch aſſertions would tend rather to alienate us from the ſyſtem, than make us partizans to it. It muſt firſt be proved, that Carthage, Eziongabar, or whatever place this Hanno departed from, was high-

er than the lands which are defined to have been at that time covered with water; it muſt be proved, that Phœnicia is higher not only than the Table Mountain, and the mountains called the Tiger Mountains, but alſo than all the interior parts of Africa, which are unexplored, but which appear, as far as a judgment can be formed of them at a diſtance, to be very lofty; it muſt be aſcertained, that the plains of America, from the foot of the Andes and the Cordeliers to the ſhore of the ſea, are of a lower level than that of Carthage, which this Hanno is ſaid to have viſited. Unleſs theſe proofs can be acquired, we are reading in the book of Nature without knowing the alphabet. In vain have I ſearched for teſtimonies in all the voyages that have been made in Africa, and followed, ſtep by ſtep, the authors who ſpeak of it; I always find the Iſthmus of Suez in my way; and am obliged to infer from it, that, while this iſthmus has exiſted, all the countries which are of a higher elevation muſt have exiſted alſo.

As a general rule, let us never compute the epochs of the firſt appearances of lands, but by their relative height above the ſurface of the ſea; and when we find traces of the ocean in any part of the globe, and would know whether the period at which theſe countries firſt emerged from the water be within the reach of our chronology, let us refer to thoſe countries to the hiſtory of which it extends, and their comparative elevation will determine the priority of their appearance; with the exception however of ſuch lands as have been produced by volcanic exploſions.

I cannot ſuppoſe, therefore, that the Panchaia Iſlands have been united to the coaſt of Aſia, ſince the ſtructure of the country does not admit of ſuch a conjecture: nor that they have been joined to Af-

rica, becauſe there is no veſtige of them whatever, and becauſe every part of this coaſt is higher than thoſe places which were contemporary with them.

My opinion is, that this archipelago has diſappeared in conſequence of ſome volcanic revolution. The innumerable rocks by which Zeila is encompaſſed, and which are a great obſtruction to navigation, are evidently the effects of ſome violent commotion: even Zeila itſelf does not ſtand perfectly firm on its foundation, but often totters from the action of the fire that is under it. Thus the face of the country, the frequent earthquakes evincing the conſtant exiſtence of an internal conflagration, the crater of Gebelthor ſtill ſmoking, all tend to confirm me in the opinion, that theſe iſlands have been ſunk in the abyſs made by the fire beneath their foundations, and that they carried with them into the whirlpool part of the ſurrounding country, particularly the ſpot between Socotara and the continent, which is now under water. This ſpace abounds with ſmall iſlands, which are viſibly the tops of eminences, preſerved by their elevation from being inundated. Socotara or Zocotara, at the period when Evemerus and the Phœnicians navigated in theſe climates, I ſuppoſe to have been the moſt diſtinguiſhed promontory of this part of the African coaſt. If it had been at that time detached from the continent, it would have been too conſiderable an iſland not to be noticed; its extent, its height, its mountains of granite contraſted with the downs of ſand which anſwer to it in Africa, its pleaſing and verdant aſpect, its fertility compared with the burning ſands from which it is ſeparated only by a narrow ſtrait, would have obtained it a place in the narratives of the earlieſt travellers.

From the arguments I have ſtated, it may be inferred, that there exiſts under the whole of this coun-

try an immenſe volcanic cavity, the fire of which has continued for a number of centuries, and which, if it does not make for itſelf an opening by which to vent its efforts, will one day, and that perhaps at no very diſtant period, produce in this part of the world ſome extraordinary event, by which the boldneſs of our conjectures, concerning the veſtiges of ſuch revolutions as have preceded us, will be juſtified.

To return to my voyage.

The commercial ſpeculation which brought me to Mocha turned out unfortunately: corn had a bad ſale there, and the produce of my cargo was not ſufficient to enable me to re-load my veſſel with coffee. I contented myſelf therefore with buying two hundred bales of that article at Bethelfakih; I filled the hold of my veſſel with ſalt, and purchaſed twenty of the larger ſort of aſſes and two cammels, which, with the neceſſary ſtock of water and proviſions for them, made up the freight. As I had not caſks enough for the water, I was obliged to ſupply their place by wells *(puits)* conſtructed by the awkward workmen of the country: but theſe leaked in the voyage; and if my cattle had not been of the moſt temperate deſcription, as thoſe of this climate generally are, they would half of them have periſhed with thirſt. While ſpeaking of my quadrupeds, I ſhall mention one circumſtance that ſtruck me as curious, which is, that the aſſes, from the moment they were put on board, continued perfectly mute through the whole voyage.

Having made all the preparations for my departure in good time, and the firſt winds of the northerly monſoon beginning to be felt during the two or three laſt days of May, I began my voyage on

the firſt of June. This precipitation however I had reaſon to repent; and I owe it as a caution to thoſe who may come after me to ſay, that it is prudent not to ſail till the monſoon is ſteadily ſet in, as they will otherwiſe be expoſed to the ſame difficulties to which I was ſubjected.

I had weighed about ſix in the evening, and when I arrived at the ſtraits it was two in the morning. As the darkneſs prevented me from clearing them, I caſt anchor at a ſhort diſtance, and remained till daylight, when the wind changed and kept me there three days. On the fourth I ſailed again, and was obliged, in the courſe of four-and-twenty hours, to repaſs the ſtraits and return into the Red Sea, where I lay at anchor two days longer, at the end of which I ſet ſail once more, but did not get much forwarder than before. I was five-and-twenty days ſtruggling againſt the currents and keeping myſelf from the coaſt of Africa, which I had thus, againſt my inclination, the leiſure of examining as far as Cape Gardafuy. When we were carried too cloſe to the land by the calms and the currents, if, in the coolneſs of the night, a ſlight breeze from the land reached the veſſel, the heat which it brought with it was ſo great, that we were obliged to ſhut our eyes, though it had ſeemingly time to cool by paſſing through a ſpace of three leagues over the ſurface of the ſea.

On the twenty-ſixth day I was attacked by one of the moſt violent tempeſts I ever experienced; the ſecond day of its continuance brought me in ſight of Socotara, and if I had had to contend with the wind and ſea together we muſt certainly have periſhed; but, fortunately, the wind blew from the ſouth-weſt, and carried us in the right courſe, which diminiſhed the force of the tempeſt. My veſſel too at this time felt the effects of the damage it had received in the Ganges; for in no other way can I account for the accident that happened to her.

One of the joints of the keel opened, and ſuddenly occaſioned a leak, which, during the violence of the ſtorm, was ſo great, that, though four pumps were conſtantly at work, and the reſt of the crew employed in emptying the water with buckets through the ſcuttles, it gained ſo conſiderably upon us, that when the wind began to abate we had no leſs than five feet and a half of water in the hold: a condition the more dreadful, as it ſhowed us the gradual approach of a fate which all our efforts could not avoid. I had prepared my piſtols, intending by means of them to rid myſelf of the miſery of ſo cruel a death, and an ineffectual ſtruggling with the waves. To increaſe the horror of our ſituation, two of the pumps broke at once, and the furniture of the third failed us. I had nothing with which to ſupply its place, and if the accident had happened twenty-four hours ſooner, it is probable that nothing could have ſaved us. By good luck the ſtorm abated, and the veſſel being leſs ſtrained, the leak made but two-and-thirty inches in an hour. It was ſtill ſuch, however, as not to be kept under by leſs than two pumps; and it was therefore indiſpenſably neceſſary to repair one of them. I ſhall enter here into a few details for the inſtruction of ſuch ſeamen into whoſe hands my book may fall.

The pumps work by two valves, one fixed upon a moveable body called the upper box, containing a hole which this valve hermetically cloſes, and the other fixed to an immoveable body called the lower box. The upper box, in deſcending, preſſes the column of water upon the valve of the lower box, and keeps it ſhut, while the ſame preſſure raiſes the valve of the upper box, and gives a paſſage through it to the water. In the re-aſcent of the upper box, when its valve ſhuts by the weight of the column of water above it, that of the lower box opens and af-

fords a paſſage to the water below it, which is thus drawn up by the ſuction. It thus appears, that the effect of the pump depends on the operation of the valves, and that without valves it could not be worked. Theſe, however, we had loſt; yet I contrived notwithſtanding to put my pumps into a condition for working. I had to find the means of ſupplying the loſs of the valves, and to ſubſtitute ſomething which would anſwer their purpoſe; that of completely ſtopping the holes of both the boxes, agreeably to the action of the pump. To effect this, I heated two four-pound ſhot, and applied them red-hot to the mouths of the valves, where I let them burn the wood ſo as to bury themſelves half-way in it; I then cooled them, and without any other preparation put them into the pump. Their weight did not prevent them from giving way to the water, as much as was neceſſary, both in the aſcent and deſcent of the upper box; and theſe two motions acting ſucceſſively upon them, brought them back to their poſition in the holes which they had burnt, and which of courſe they exactly filled. By this contrivance the pump worked as well as ever.

After thirteen days of fatigue and trouble, I came in ſight of the coaſt of Malabar. My crew now became refractory, and threatened to run the veſſel aground, being determined not to expoſe themſelves to the danger of a longer voyage. It was with great difficulty I prevailed upon them to accompany me as far as Pondicherry, where our labours would end. When we reached this place we were all in a miſerable ſtate, exhauſted with weakneſs and fatigue. I received all the aſſiſtance that could be given me, and began to unload my cargo, which had ſuffered by the accidents of the paſſage. I had loſt a camel and ten aſſes; the reſt ſoon recovered their ſtrength, and I ſent them by another veſſel to the

Isle of France, and had mine repaired in the river of Coringui. The entrance of this river was difficult for so large a ship, but luckily the bar consisted only of soft mud, through which I made a passage with the help of my capstan.

At the time of my arrival in this river, the country was afflicted by a most cruel famine; the inhabitants died with such dreadful rapidity, that they could not be buried. The roads and fields were strewed with dead bodies, which had made this province the country of jackals and birds of prey: this was a disgusting spectacle, and it was out of the power of the government to remedy it.

The conduct of the people during the continuance of this destructive calamity was marked with a resignation and fortitude, that prove how compatible the contempt of death is with the utmost gentleness of manners. The granaries of the rich were full of corn; the poorer sort knew this, yet suffered themselves to perish, without attempting to make themselves masters of it. The manner in which they waited for death and submitted to it, appears, from its singularity, to be worthy of record. Though my pencil shrinks from the delineation, I will nevertheless attempt it, that a faithful portrait may be given of the character of the natives of India.

As soon as an individual of either sex found, that all his efforts to prolong existence were in vain, he caused himself to be carried to the door of some rich man, in whose sight he wished to expire, as if to reproach him for not having extended to him from his hoard the relief, which would have saved him from death. There, lying upon the ground, and receiving from his friends a pot of water, sufficient to maintain him for two or three days, with his head wrapped in his apron, he waited patiently for the fatal moment, defending himself to his last

breath againſt the animals that attempted to devour him alive, while no exhortations, on the part of thoſe who offered to ſuccour him, could induce him to accept the means, which, in his own opinion, were uſeleſs, for preſerving a life he had reſolved to ſacrifice. Thoſe whom ſome remains of ſtrength deceived with the hopes of a longer exiſtence, and who were ſurpriſed by death, fell indiſcriminately wherever it ſeized upon them. I was ſeldom without the diſtreſſing ſpectacle, every morning, of three or four bodies of perſons who had died in this manner during the night. The fortitude of the Indians endured to the laſt moment: they ſaw death approaching, waited for it, and ſubmitted to the ſtroke without a murmur or complaint, without having engaged in any ſeditious tumults, without having offered even the ſmalleſt violence to thoſe whoſe affluence protected them from a ſimilar fate, and died, calling upon Brama, their laſt hours unimbittered by a ſingle ſentiment of malevolence.

But enough of theſe gloomy images.

The road of Coringui is the wintering place to which veſſels retire that are obliged to paſs the bad ſeaſon on the coaſt of India. The worſt that can happen to them in this ſituation is to be aground upon the mud banks, which is not attended with the ſlighteſt riſk. Shipwrecks nevertheleſs are frequent in theſe parts, which ariſes from the ſandy point that defends the bay to the ſouth, projecting conſiderably into the ſea, with dangerous ridges and ſhelves.

During my ſtay in this place, a veſſel ſtruck ſuddenly in the night againſt this point, and was loſt. I ſent out my boats and crew to her aſſiſtance, and many articles were ſaved, among which was ſome rice in a ſack. The water had affected it, and the

grains had ſwelled and were burſt; yet, ſo great was the ſcarcity in this place, that it ſold at the rate of ſix rupees the ſack, which is fifteen livres for a hundred and fifty pounds weight. Mr. Dineur, the ſupercargo, teſtified his gratitude by making me an offer of an elegant boat, which I refuſed to accept as a preſent, but which I agreed to purchaſe of him. He wiſhed me to take it at a price much below its value, but what I had done required no recompenſe: in a caſe of this nature, all ſeamen are brothers, and ought to aſſiſt each other to the utmoſt of their power.

As I did not find at Coringui the neceſſary materials for repairing my ſhip's bottom, I could not have her properly careened, and was obliged to run her aſhore, and have her put upon the ſtocks. It is in this buſineſs that the induſtry of the Indians ſhines forth in all its ſplendour: by their patience and perſeverance, they effect, with the aſſiſtance of no tackling, no pulleys, no ropes, no capſtan, no mechanical force of any ſort, what we are unable to perform without the aid of many, the moſt powerful, means combined. Labour coſts them ſo little, that the expenſe of it is ſcarcely an object of attention. The pay of a workman is a *dabou* per day; ſo that for a rupee of the value of about fifty ſous, or two ſhillings ſterling, the labour of eighty men may be obtained. What is more extraordinary, this trivial pay is ſufficient, in an ordinary year, for the maintenance of an Indian and his whole family.

Their method of raiſing a veſſel is ſimple and ingenious. The details into which I ſhall enter upon this ſubject will be found perhaps inſipid to many of my readers; but thoſe who have a pleaſure in contemplating the progreſs of the human mind will

not be offended, though I ſhould be a little tedious in dwelling upon particulars, which will furniſh a compariſon between nations yet young in exiſtence, and thoſe whom luxury and the arts have advanced to the height of civilization.

They begin by fixing upon the ſpot in the meadow where the veſſel is to be placed, and this being done, they dig a baſon there, which they call *goudi*. When the baſon is deep enough to contain the veſſel, they admit water into it from the river, by piercing a little dike which has been made at its entrance. As this country, however, is not yet hardened and dry, but has water a little below its ſurface, as ſoon as they have dug to the depth of two or three feet, their trench is overflowed: in this ſituation, without a pump or any machine whatever, with nothing but a bucket, they clear it as completely as could be done with all the aſſiſtance of hydraulics. This method of baling out water is not confined to maritime operations; they uſe it likewiſe in watering their fields, when they have not an opportunity of eſtabliſhing a *picote* *.

The bucket they employ for this purpoſe is flat, and has four handles, to which are faſtened as many ropes, the ends of which are held by four men, two on each ſide. Though the bucket is flat, it has a ſort of hollow on one ſide, which we ſhall call the back; the front, on the contrary, is in the form of a ſhovel, or rather, to ſpeak more intelligibly, the implement itſelf is a ſort of hollow ſhovel. Two cords are faſtened to the handles at the corners of the front, and two others to the back. The greater is the depth of the baſon, the further do the men who work the bucket ſtand from the point to

* An inſtrument for drawing water reſembling that of our gardeners and brickmakers.—T.

which the water is to be thrown. Their distance from this object ought to be equal to the depth, since the bucket in its motion describes the arc of a circle, of which the ropes are the radii, and the men the centre.

To understand the operation of this implement, which is more worthy of attention as it supplies the place of a pump, let us figure to ourselves the situation of the right-hand man. In his left hand he holds the rope fastened to the front of the bucket, and in his right that of the back (the man on the left holds them in the contrary hands). He begins by swinging the bucket: after which, lengthening out the ropes, he lets it down so as to touch the water, and then with a slight effort of his left hand forces the front of the bucket below the surface, and thus fills it. In completing the arc of a circle, it reaches the height to which it is to be raised, when by the rope in his right hand he depresses the back of it, and the water runs out. The bucket descends in the same direction, fills again in returning, and empties itself in the same manner. It is easy to conceive, that the motion is quick, and, if the bucket be of any size, that the exercise must be very fatiguing. I estimated this contrivance to be equal in its effect to a pump four inches in diameter in the tube, and worked by eight men.

With the help of this bucket, they keep their bason dry, till they have dug a sufficient depth to float a ship when filled by the water at high tide. They then open the bason when the tide is down, by raising the little dike which defends the entrance of it. The vessel then enters it without difficulty, at the return of the tide, and as soon as it is in, they stop up the mouth of the bason, by replacing the dike which they had removed; and thus their vessel is

afloat, inclosed in a bason dug in the middle of a field.

An European engineer would think that as yet little was done, and would consider the rest of the operation as the greatest difficulty. The Indians, on the contrary, have performed the most laborious part of their work, and make no account of the remainder. Their bucket has still to make a great figure, and by means of two of these instruments they fill the bason to the brim in a day at most. The vessel rises with the water, and when the *goudi* is full, they bring earth and raise a bank round the vessel, still filling with their buckets as they go on. They might thus lift their vessel to the clouds, if they were to employ a sufficient quantity of earth; but they seldom raise it more than ten feet. When it has attained the necessary height, they fill the goudi with earth, by which the water rises above the banks and runs off, and the vessel is entrenched in a soft earth, which yields to its shape. When the water is cleared, they make the holes at the bottom of the bank, to drain the mould on which the vessel rests thoroughly dry; and in this state they leave it for six weeks or two months, till they judge the earth to have acquired a sufficient solidity. They then dig round the vessel, placing the requisite supports and stocks; and finish the whole by taking away all the earth they have brought, which leaves the vessel raised upon the ground, and in a situation to allow all the necessary repairs to be done to her bottom. This method of proceeding is the more ingenious, as it neither requires extraordinary exertion of strength, nor is exposed to accidents: the only inconvenience attending it is its slowness, which however is but a slight disadvantage in a country, where the vessels are prevented by the monsoons from making more than one voyage in a year.

Such was the mode to which I was obliged to resort in repairing my ship, and which detained me till January. I then returned to Pondicherry, whence I sailed to the Isle of France and thus finished my voyage.

INDEX.

A.

Author sails from the Isle of France, page 3; arrives on the Sechelles' bank, 4; loses one of his men, 14; arrives at Pondicherry, 18; reception there, 56; sails for Bengal, touches at Madras, 110; lands near Fulta, 130; alarmed by an enormous serpent, 131; arrives at Calcutta, 133; experiences a dangerous storm, 135; dishonesty of the port-officers, 137; singular adventure to rescue a woman, 180; sails from Calcutta, 197; anchors in the road of Cochin, 201; impositions practised there, 203; sails from thence, and arrives at Mocha, 208; reception by the Governor, 217; one of his crew embraces the Mahometan Religion, 242; its melancholy consequences, 244; spirited conduct to recover his men, 246; contemplates a dangerous enterprise, 249; sails from Mocha, 287; his ship damaged by a violent tempest, 287; ingenious contrivance to repair his pumps, 289; arrives on the coast of Malabar, 289; returns to Pondicherry, and from thence to the Isle of France, 295.

Accommodations for travellers in India, 72.

Agriculture in India, 93; — in Arabia, 260.

Assassination of Capt. Nun, 210.

Arabs, their manner of preparing coffee, 217; religious exercises, 223; military exercises, 224; luxurious mode of living, 232; 269; dress, and marks of distinction, 235; manner of dividing time, 236; imperfect navigation, 260.

Arabian manners and customs, 269; military force, 224; 227; 277.

Abyssinian Female slaves, 228.

B.

Bengal, productions of, 170; Dutch settlements there, 195.

Bramins, their hospitality, 72; religious customs,
Bazar, or market-place at Mocha, 229.
Banians, 237; their character, 239.
Bezoar-stone, its valuable properties, 82.
Books of the Indians, 61; — of the Bramins, 183.

C.

Chelingue, an Indian boat described, 47.
Character of the Indians, 95; — of the Arabs, 274.
Cultivation of the sugar-cane in Bengal, 171; of cotton, and cocoa-nuts, 95; — of coffee in Yemen, 265.
Catholic Religion at Madras, 115.
Calcutta, general description of, 144; 151; its trade, 158.
Cochin, impositions practised there, 202.
Camel, its singularities, 257.

D.

Devotions of the Indians, 74; — of the Arabs, 223.
Desertion among the Author's crew, 242; its melancholy consequences, 244.

E.

Effects of opium, 37; *note;* — of the French Revolution in India, 190; 195.
English East India Company, their policy and government, 120; privileges, 153; their extensive power, 165.
English adventurers in India, 159.
European Establishments in Bengal, 187; Factories at Mocha, 221.

F.

Female Dancers in India, 75.
Faquirs, their horrible fanaticism, 79.
Fall of the French power in India 99; 105.
Fortifications at Madras, 112; at Pondicherry, 27.
French, their bad system in India, 23.
French Revolution, its effects in India, 190; 195.
Famine in India, 290.

G.

German Missionary at Mocha, 248.
Gum arabic, brought from Abyssinia, 267.
Government of the English E. I. Company, 120; 165.
Geography of India, 122.

H.

Horses at Calcutta, 151.
Hyder Aly, 21.
Handkerchiefs, manufactured at Madras, 118.

I.

Indians, their general character, 95; their skill in spinning, 117; — manner of receiving a stranger, 56; — method of writing, 61; — devotions, 75; dress, 75; coins, 30; — dancing women, 75; their manner of drawing water, 94; their superstitions, 173; their literature, 154; 183; their method of careening a ship, 292.
Indian priests, 79; — artisans, 87; 90; — architecture, 89; — agriculture, 93; carriages, 114; naval architecture, 121; — manufacture of handkerchiefs, 118.

J.

Jews settled at Mocha, 236.

K.

Karikal, its productions, 29.

L.

Land Tortoise in India, 13.
Lascar sailors, 196.

M.

Madras, author's arrival there, 111; general description of, 112.
Malays, their madness when intoxicated with opium, 37, *note*.
Mankind, different races of, 62.
Madame Dourga, the divinity of the River Ganges, 173.
Mocha, author's arrival there, 208; description of, 213; 229; 253; European factories there, 221; its population, 230; luxury of the Inhabitants, 232; — menaced by the French Company, 251; — its excellent fruit-market, 262.

N.

Nun, an English captain assassinated, 210.
Naval architecture of the Indians, 121.
Navigation of the Arabs, 260.

O.

Oil of Roses, excellent at Mocha, 264.

P.

PARIA, an Indian veſſel deſcribed, 121.
Pondicherry, author's arrival there, 18; general deſcription of, 25; 55; 99; military force, 18.
Pilaw, an Arabian diſh deſcribed, 264.
Portrait of Louis XVI. at Mocha, 240.

Q.

QUADRUPEDS of India, 168.
Quarrel of the author with the Arabian government, 245.

R.

RAVENS numerous at Calcutta, 148.
Reception of the author at Pondicherry 56; ——— at Mocha, 218.
Religious ceremonies of the Indians, 177; ——— of the Arabians 223; 240.
Royal Tiger at Cadjery, 127.
Refraction at Sea, extraordinary inſtance of, 199.

S.

SECHELLES, author's arrival there, 4; general deſcription of, 5; — inquiries reſpecting their formation, ibid.
Spices, conveyed to the Sechelles' Iſlands, and naturaliſed there, 9; deſtroyed on a falſe alarm, 11.
State of the arts in India, 86; in Arabia, 259.
Smuggling trade to the Spice Iſlands, 121.

T.

TIME, diviſion of, among the Arabians, 236.
Trincomale, or the iſland of Ceylon, 32; its reputation above its value, 33; trade carried on there, 37.
Theory of the formation of iſlands, 5; — of human colour, 62; — of the retreat of the ſea, 279.

V.

VESSELS of the Indians, 47; 121.

W.

WIDOWS of the Bramins burn themſelves, 179.
Women, ſecluſion of, in Arabia, 232; 271.

Y.

YEMEN, its productions 263; —coffee the chief object of cultivation, 265.

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